the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

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KING'S RANSOM

MARVEL

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

Kindred turned Peter's world upside down. Norman Osborn, the Green Goblin, having been "cleansed" of his sins by the Sin-Eater, revealed that Kindred is actually his son, Harry Osborn. Harry's reign of terror over Peter Parker ended when Norman and Mayor Wilson Fisk, A.K.A. the Kingpin, trapped Kindred in a Darkforce cage. With Kindred put away, Peter was finally ready to put the Osborn family drama behind him and return to his normal life.

Peter now shares an apartment with "reformed villain" Fred Myers, A.K.A Boomerang, Randy Robertson and their pet alien, Gog. Gog used to guard the pieces of the powerful Lifeline Tablet, which Boomerang and Spider-Man are endeavoring to keep out of Kingpin's hands. But Kingpin has plans of his own...

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

KING'S RANSOM

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61

LET'S TRY SOMETHING NEW!

OKAY, YEAH, LET'S JUST COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY IT--

--I'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT LATELY.

IT'S BEEN A VERY DARK STRETCH, AND I'VE HAD TO LEAN ON THE PEOPLE I LOVE TO GET THROUGH IT.

TO BE HONEST, THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I WASN'T EVEN SURE I COULD MOVE ON--

--BUT THEN ONE DAY, A BANK IS GETTING ROBBED...

A BUNCH OF SUPER VILLAINS (IN THIS CASE, SHOCKER, SPEED DEMON, AND HYDRO-MAN) RACE OUT. AND JUST LIKE THAT--

--IT'S AS IF NOTHING'S CHANGED AT ALL.

THWEP THWEP THWEP

THWEP THWEP

I WANT TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO MEET WITH ME.

I UNDERSTAND HOW ***BUSY*** YOU ALL ARE. AFTER ALL--

--BUSINESS HAS BEEN ***BOOMING***, HASN'T IT?

YOU'LL GET NO COMPLAINTS OUT OF ME, FISK. LAST QUARTER WAS THE ***MAGGIA'S*** BEST YET.

HH. YES, OF COURSE, ***HAMMERHEAD***, YOU WOULDN'T COMPLAIN-- YOU'VE BEEN EXPANDING SO RAPIDLY INTO ***MY*** TERRITORY.

YOU GOT SOMETHING TO ***SAY***, OWL? 'CAUSE I DON'T SEE YOUR NAME ON ANYTHING IN RED HOOK.

WELL, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD VISIT AGAIN, JUST THE ***TWO*** OF US. I'LL BE HAPPY TO SHOW YOU--

GENTLEMEN, PLEASE-- ***ENOUGH!***

THERE'S NO NEED FOR THESE KINDS OF PETTY SQUABBLES ANYMORE.

NOT ONLY IS THERE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO GO AROUND, BUT THESE SORTS OF DISPUTES CAN BE ADJUDICATED AND ARBITRATED BY MY ADMINISTRATION IF NEEDED.

UH, NAH, KINGPIN, THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY--

GOOD. YOU SEE?

LOOK HOW FAR WE'VE COME. THESE DAYS, ALL OF YOUR OPERATIONS HAVE BEEN REGULATED, STREAMLINED, AND DONE IN CONJUNCTION WITH CITY HALL WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

YES, HAVING WILSON FISK IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE HAS TRULY BEEN A BOON TO *ALL* OF YOUR EMPIRES. BUT YOU HAD TO KNOW, MY FRIENDS--

--ALL OF THAT COMES AT A *PRICE.*

YOU CAN SPARE US ALL THE *THEATRICS*, KINGPIN. EVERYONE AT THIS TABLE UNDERSTANDS THE DEAL.

YEAH. HOW ABOUT YOU JUST TELL US WHAT YOU WANT?

A FAIR QUESTION, *CRIME MASTER.*

BUT IT'S NOT WHAT I WANT, IT'S *WHOM.*

FRED MYERS.

BOOMERANG.

I HATE THAT GUY.

WHICH, HONESTLY, TRACKS--

--ESPECIALLY FOR THE *KINGPIN.*

WE'VE BEEN LOCKED IN A HUNT FOR THE FINAL PIECES OF THE *LIFELINE TABLET.*

HELPS THAT BOOMERANG WAS GIVEN MYSTICAL VISIONS OF WHERE TO FIND THEM.

AS WE'VE GOTTEN CLOSER AND CLOSER, FRED'S VISIONS HAVE INCREASED.

BUT LATELY...

...WE'VE RUN INTO SOME DELAYS.

WE DO HAVE *OTHER* RESPONSIBILITIES NOW, AFTER ALL.

AND NO, AS IMPORTANT AS IT IS, I DON'T MEAN *CALL OF DUTY: LATVERIA* HERE--

FOR SYMKARIA!

--I MEAN THE *NEW PET.*

CHOMP!

BZZZT

LET'S JUST SAY HOUSE TRAINING HASN'T BEEN GOING AS WELL AS I'D LIKE.

GOG! NOT AGAIN!

AW, RELAX, PETE, THE LITTLE GUY CAN'T HELP IT--

CAN YOU, LITTLE GOGGY WOGGY? YOU JUST *LOVE* THOSE TASTY POWER CORDS, *DON'T* YOU?

I DON'T THINK *ELECTRICAL TAPE* IS GONNA WORK THIS TIME...

HEY, I CAN ALWAYS STEAL US-- I MEAN, *FIND* US A STEAL OF A BARGAIN ON ANOTHER TV. YOU CAN'T PUT A PRICE ON THIS LOVE. BESIDES, DON'T FORGET--

--THIS LITTLE GUY IS GONNA MAKE US *RICH!*

AH, YES, FRED'S *LATEST* GET RICH QUICK SCHEME--

@MYPETGOG!!!

@MYPETGOG!!!

HE HEARD THERE WAS A LOT OF MONEY IN *INSTAGRAM ANIMAL PICTURES.*

@MYPETGOG!!!

@MYPETGOG!!!

AND OF COURSE, ME BEING A *PHOTOGRAPHER,* I GOT ROPED IN TO HANDLE THE *CREATIVE.* AND UNSURPRISINGLY--

--THE ACCOUNT'S A *HUGE HIT.* I MEAN, COME ON, HE *IS* AWFULLY CUTE.

BUT SO FAR, OTHER THAN A COUPLE OFFERS TO SPONSOR CUSTOM DOG TOYS--

--WE HAVEN'T EVEN MADE ENOUGH TO COVER THE *FOOD* BUDGET.

TELLIN' YA, PETE, IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE'S THE NEXT LOCKHEED.

SPEAKING OF TIME, I KNOW RENT'S COMING UP. I WAS WONDERING IF YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO--

INSPIRE YOU TO EMBRACE YOUR INNER *ENTREPRENEUR?*

DON'T SWEAT IT, PETE--YOU'LL COME UP WITH *SOMETHING!*

SO YEAH, AFTER *MONTHS* OF UNEMPLOYMENT, I WAS GETTING PRETTY DESPERATE. *HOW* DESPERATE?

"NORAH WINTERS" DESPERATE.

ONE OF THE WORST THINGS ABOUT SECRET IDENTITIES-- YOU GET THE SAME OFFICE TOURS TWICE.

PEEEETE... SO GLAD YOU *FINALLY* GOT BACK TO ME.

WELCOME TO THE NEW *THREATS AND MENACES.*

SO YOU LIKED MY PROPOSAL?

TO BE HONEST, I COULDN'T REALLY *UNDERSTAND* IT. A LOTTA, *UM*--

BUZZWORDS? SORRY. I'VE GONE *CORPORATE*, I KNOW--

--BUT SO FAR IT SEEMS TO BE WORKING OUT.

WOW, THEY LOOK... *BUSY.*

THEY *BETTER* BE. TRAFFIC IS WAY UP--

--AND IT'S ABOUT TO GO *THROUGH THE ROOF.*

WHAT IS *THIS?*

A GIFT FOR YOUR FRIEND.

YOU MEAN THIS IS FOR *SPIDER-MAN?*

WELL, WE COULDN'T HAVE OUR OWN RESIDENT SUPER HERO LOOKING ANYTHING OTHER THAN *SPECTACULAR,* COULD WE?

BUT DON'T THINK IT'S ALL JUST APPEARANCES.

"THIS SUIT WILL BE A *SERIOUS* UPGRADE IN THE FIELD. MAKING SPIDEY *STRONGER*--

SPLASH

"--AND *FASTER*. NOT TO MENTION ALL THE WEARABLE SURVEILLANCE TECH TO AUGMENT THE FAMOUS *SPIDEY-SENSE*.

TWANG!

"THEN THERE'S THOSE *WEB-SHOOTERS*..."

AAK

IT'S ALL REALLY *IMPRESSIVE*, NORAH. BUT--

--WHAT DO *YOU* GET OUT OF IT?

FAIR QUESTION. HERE, LET ME *SHOW* YOU.

NOW, THIS THING IS MADE OF UNSTABLE MOLECULES FOR EASY CHANGING, BUT WE CAN DO THIS THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY.

NO, HEY, HOLD ON--

OH, *RELAX*, YOU BIG BABY. LOOK AT *THAT*-- PERFECT FIT.

NOW TAKE A PEEK OVER THERE.

WAIT-- THAT'S MY P.O.V.!

THAT'S RIGHT. *YOU'RE* SPIDER-MAN, PETER PARKER.

NOW *ANY* OL' SCHLUB CAN BE, AFTER ALL.

THANKS TO THOSE CAMERAS, WE'RE OFFERING A FULLY IMMERSIVE, HIGHLY INTERACTIVE SUPER-POWERED EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR MOBILE DEVICE, DESKTOP, OR VR HEADSET.

IMAGINE IT. WHENEVER SPIDEY IS IN THE FIELD, SO ARE *YOU*. ONCE YOU LOG ON, YOU SEE WHAT HE SEES, HEAR WHAT HE HEARS--AND YOU GET TO BE PART OF THE ACTION.

NORAH, WHAT SPIDER-MAN DOES, IT'S *SERIOUS* BUSINESS. IT'S ABOUT SAVING PEOPLE'S LIVES--IT'S NOT A GAME.

OF COURSE NOT. IT'S *JOURNALISM*. GIVING THE PUBLIC A FIRSTHAND LOOK AT THE LIFE OF SOMEONE TRYING TO KEEP THEM SAFE--

LETTING THEM SEE WHAT A *HERO* HE IS.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, M'BOY?

PRETTY *IMPRESSIVE*, ISN'T IT?

THAT'S *ONE* WORD FOR IT--

--*DANGEROUS* IS ANOTHER.

SPIDER-MAN CAN'T JUST BE LIVE-BROADCASTING--HE HAS...SENSITIVE *SECRETS* HE MIGHT NEED TO *PROTECT.*

WHICH IS WHY IT'S ALL ON A *DELAY.* AND ONLY WHEN SPIDEY FEELS UP TO IT, THE FEED IS UPLOADED TO A SECURE PRIVATE SERVER, ABLE TO BE MONITORED BY ONLY TWO PEOPLE. YOU--

--AND *ME!* FINALLY, THE MAN IN THE CHAIR!

I *ASSURE* YOU, PARKER, PROTECTING SPIDER-MAN'S SECRETS WAS MY *TOP PRIORITY* EVERY STEP OF THE WAY IN PUTTING ALL THIS TOGETHER.

I DUNNO, JONAH--THIS STILL SOUNDS PRETTY *RISKY.*

NOT TO MENTION IT FEELS A LITTLE... *OPPORTUNISTIC?*

--IS IT REALLY SO DIFFERENT FROM SELLING PICTURES OF HIM TO THE *DAILY BUGLE?*

WELL, THERE IS *ONE* BIG DIFFERENCE.

THIS IS WHAT WE'RE OFFERING TO PAY HIM.

THAT'S BECAUSE IT IS AN *OPPORTUNITY!* THAT PODCAST WE DID *PROVED* IT--THE WORLD IS HUNGRY TO GET TO KNOW THE REAL SPIDER-MAN!

THERE'S NO SHAME IN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THAT. THINK ABOUT IT--

AND HE GETS TO KEEP THE *SUIT.*

AND AT FIRST, NOT THAT MUCH FEELS ANY DIFFERENT.

BUT THEN I HEAR A LITTLE VOICE IN MY HEAD--

AND FOR *ONCE*, IT'S NOT INNER NARRATION.

DON'T FORGET YOUR ONE-LINERS!

HUH?

YOUR *ONE-LINERS!* THE AUDIENCE SUBMITS THEM FOR YOU TO READ IN THE FIGHTS!

WAIT... THEY'RE WRITING MY *JOKES* FOR ME?

CHECK YOUR PHONE!

ALL RIGHT, *UH*, THIS ONE'S FROM BRENDAN IN TAMPA--

"HEY, HYDRO-MAN, WE'RE TRYING TO HAVE SOME FUN HERE, WHY SUCH A WET BLANKET?"

WOW, THAT'S TERRIBLE.

THIS ONE'S FROM JAKE IN DES MOINES--

"SHOUTOUT TO MY BOYS TREVOR, DYLAN, AND"--

HEY, WAIT, THAT'S NOT EVEN A *JOKE*, IT'S JUST--

UNFFF!!!

ALL RIGHT, *ENOUGH.* TIME TO WEB THESE MORONS UP AND--

NO, WAIT!

WHAT NOW?

THE *AUDIENCE POLL*--THEY WANNA SEE YOU DO THE *WEB-MUCK!*

THERE'S AN AUDIENCE POLL? AND THEY WANT THAT?

THWWWWWUUUUUUP

THIRTY-SIX PERCENT OF THEM DO!

OKAY--

ONE MUCKING COMING UP!

HAPPY NOW?

OVER THE MOON! NOW, JUST SAY, "THIS CRIMINAL APPREHENSION IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU-UNDIES"--

JONAH, THERE IS *NO WAY* I AM GONNA SAY--

PHOOOM

Zzzz-

KAPOW

UNDIES

KAPOW

SIGH. YOU KNOW, I HAD A SUPER VILLAIN WHO DID THIS STUFF ONCE.* I THOUGHT IT WAS THE END OF CIVILIZATION.

BUT CIVILIZATION FELT DIFFERENT, I GUESS--

*SPIDEY'S REFERRING TO SCREWBALL, OF COURSE, FROM WAY BACK IN *ASM #559!* --NL

--BECAUSE JONAH AND NORAH WERE RIGHT--THE WHOLE THING WAS A *HUGE SUCCESS!*

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE LOGGED IN, AND JUDGING BY THE REVIEWS (YES, THEY LEAVE ME ***REVIEWS***), EVERYONE ***LOVED*** IT--

--WELL, ALMOST EVERYONE.

THEY CALL THIS JOURNALISM?

WHATEVER THEY'RE CALLING IT, IT'S GENERATING A LOT OF HEAT. WHILE WE'RE LOSING SUBSCRIBERS AND CIRCULATION, ADVERTISERS CAN'T LINE UP FAST ENOUGH OVER AT T.A.M.

I HEARD THERE'S A LOW SEVEN-FIGURE BIDDING WAR FOR SPOTS DURING THE SPIDEY STREAMS.

SIGH JONAH, YOU NEVER CHANGE.

PAY NO MIND TO THE CIRCUS, PEOPLE.

THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEMS WON'T BE STUNTS AND GIMMICKS, BUT GOOD OLD-FASHIONED, HARD-NOSED INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING--

--LIKE THIS EXPOSE ON LONNIE THOMPSON LINCOLN--A.K.A. TOMBSTONE.

WE KNOW HE'S STARTED PUTTING THE MONEY HIS CRIMINAL EMPIRE BUILT UP INTO LEGITIMATE BUSINESSES AND REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENTS ALL OVER UPTOWN.

LET'S PUT SOME SUNLIGHT ON THOSE DEALS. SO WHAT DO WE GOT? GLORY?

OH, WE GOT SOMETHING GOOD--

--HIS DAUGHTER, ***JANICE LINCOLN.*** THE NEW ***BEETLE.***

SHE'S GOT HER OWN GANG, ALL LADIES. CALL THEMSELVES THE ***SYNDICATE.***

INTERESTING. WHAT'S HER ***ANGLE?***

POSSIBLE SHE'S INHERITED ALL THE CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES FROM DADDY WHILE HE HANDLES ALL THE ABOVE THE BOARD STUFF.

A ***FAMILY BUSINESS,*** KINDA REVERSE-*GODFATHER.* ***THAT'S*** A STORY! I LIKE IT. PUT SOME CAMERAS ON HER--LET'S FOLLOW UP NEXT WEEK.

IN THE MEANTIME, IF YOU ALL WILL EXCUSE ME--

--I'VE GOT SOME FAMILY BUSINESS OF MY ***OWN.***

THERE HE IS!

HEY, POP. YOU NEED TO ***RESCHEDULE?*** I DON'T WANNA INTERRUPT--

NONSENSE.

ME, MISS LUNCH WITH THE FAMOUS ***RANDY ROBERTSON?*** AFTER IT TOOK SO LONG FOR HIM TO FIND TIME FOR ME IN ***HIS*** SCHEDULE? NO CHANCE.

YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING AWFULLY BUSY, MY SON.

YEAH--

--ABOUT ***THAT...***

SO YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR MISSION, THEN-- BOOMERANG IS TO BE BROUGHT TO *ME.*

EASY ENOUGH. AND DON'T GET ME WRONG--

--I'D GUT BOOMERANG FOR *FREE,* FISK.

BUT I'M NOT *GONNA* DO IT FOR FREE, YOU UNDERSTAND. WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

OF COURSE, SILVERMANE--

--THIS IS A "GET OUT OF JAIL FREE" CARD--YOU MIGHT RECOGNIZE IT FROM THE GAME.

BUT THIS ONE IS VERY, VERY *REAL.*

WHOEVER BRINGS ME FRED MYERS WILL BE GIVEN *THIS.*

AND IT MEANS, QUITE SIMPLY, THAT AS LONG AS I AM MAYOR, YOU, AND ANY OF YOUR ASSOCIATES, WILL BE *IMMUNE* FROM ARREST, INTERROGATION, OR APPREHENSION BY MY POLICE DEPARTMENT.

GET OUT OF JAIL FREE

IMAGINE WHAT THIS COULD MEAN FOR YOUR OPERATIONS-- TO BE COMPLETELY UNFETTERED AND UNTETHERED FROM THE LAW. WHAT MORE COULD YOU *ASK* FOR?

PRETTY IMPRESSIVE OFFER, FISK--

--AND I'LL CERTAINLY BE TAKIN' *MY* SWING.

BUT I'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON BOOMERANG, AND HE'S NOT GONNA BE SO EASY TO NAB. HE'S GOT SOME MIGHTY TOUGH *FRIENDS* THESE DAYS.

HH. YOU MEAN SPIDER-MAN.

"IT'S TRUE, THE TWO OF THEM HAVE FORMED QUITE THE *BOND* RECENTLY.

"AND I WILL ADMIT, IT'S BEEN A FORMIDABLE PARTNERSHIP. BUT I HAVE FOUND THAT BEHIND EVERY OBSTACLE HIDES AN *OPPORTUNITY*...

"AND IN THIS CASE, THEY ARE ONE AND THE SAME."

YES, I'VE FOUND HIS WEAKNESS.

"NOW I PLAN TO *EXPLOIT* IT."

GAH! I CAN'T BELIEVE WE JUST GOT BEAT UP BY AN *INFLUENCER.* HUMILIATING.

YEAH...NOT THE BEST DEBUT FOR THE *BOOMERANG REVENGE SQUAD,* FELLAS.

WAIT--*WHAT* DID YOU GUYS CALL YOURSELVES?

YOU HEARD IT THE FIRST TIME, SPIDEY--

--WE WERE JUST THE *DISTRACTION,* AFTER ALL.

DISTRACTION?

OH MY GOD--

--HE IS JUST THE *CUTEST THING!*

CAN I *PET* HIM?

WELL, OF *COURSE* YOU CAN. YOU *ALL* CAN, LADIES, JUST ONE AT A TIME--HE'S *SHY*, NOT LIKE HIS *DAD.*

I HAVE HIM--

--LOCKED ON AND IN MY SIGHTS.

JUST GIVE ME THE ORDER, MR. MAYOR...

"...AND THE GOG GETS IT."

#61 VARIANT BY JULIAN TOTINO TEDESCO

62

WAG THE GOG

HE'S DONE SO WELL ELUDING ME. *ANNOYING* ME. INTERFERING WITH MY PLANS.

A ROGUE LIKE *BOOMERANG* IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN HE MAY SEEM--

TNNEP

FASTER!

--ALL CUNNING AND GUILE. BUT I'VE FOUND HIS *WEAKNESS*.

COME ON! *FASTER!*

TNNEP

HE'S BECOME JUST LIKE THE HERO HE USED TO *DESPISE*.

IF YOU CAN'T HURT *HIM*--

"--HURT WHAT HE *LOVES.*"

SO, IF YOU WANT, WE COULD SET UP A *PLAYDATE--*

BOOMERANG!

PUT YOUR HANDS UP!

OH, HEY, FELLAS. CHUCK, DANNY--GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

I SAID, *PUT YOUR HANDS UP!*

YOU KNOW, I *WOULD*, BUT I GOT THE LITTLE GUY'S LEASH, AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE HAD AN ACCIDENT OVER THERE--I DON'T PICK IT UP, THAT'S A *FINE*, RIGHT?

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

ALWAYS. BUT--HEY, GOG, BUDDY, *CALM DOWN--*

*GET DOWN ON THE GROUND-- **NOW!***

GRRRRRRRR SNARF--

GOG, SERIOUSLY, CHILL--

JUST SAY THE WORD, BOSS.

TAKE THE SHOT.

FASTER, YOU IDIOT!

GO! BEFORE IT'S TOO--

TLAK

BAM!

--LATE.

OKAY, THIS IS BAD.

SPIDEY, THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE!

STILL GETTING USED TO SAYING THAT.

IT'S GOG! HE'S--

HUGE.

MY GIANT HOUSE PET THAT I'VE HAD FOR A MONTH IS ALREADY GIANT AGAIN.

--HIS COLLAR.

BUT HOW? THAT SHOT MUST'VE HIT--

THWIP

THWIP

THWIP

THWIP

THWIP

GOTTA FIND A WAY TO GET THAT THING BACK ON HIM BEFORE--

THWEP

AAAAHHH!

WHACK

--SOMEBODY GETS HURT.

STOMP!

DON'T WORRY, SPIDEY, I GOT--

FREEZE, MYERS!

SORRY, CHUCK.

HERE COMES A *FASTBALL SPECIAL*, SPIDEY!

HOPE THEY DON'T HAVE A COPYRIGHT ON THAT.

BRRANNNG

KE-CH

GOT IT!

QUESTION IS--

--NOW WHAT?

GOTTA RECALIBRATE THIS THING ON THE FLY.

THEN IN ?UNFF? MIDAIR.

BWOMP

PLEASE

LET

THIS

WORK

CLICK

YOINK

BW-BW-BW-BWP

AND IT DOES.

BARELY.

YOU KNOW, THIS WAS A KIND OF RESPONSIBILITY I *AVOIDED* FOR A LONG TIME.

I TOLD MYSELF I HAVE ENOUGH OF A COMPLEX IN THAT DEPARTMENT.

SNARF

NOW I FEEL LIKE A COMPLETE FOOL. YEAH, IT'S A LOT OF WORK. A LOT OF STRESS.

BUT AS I HOLD THE LITTLE GUY IN MY ARMS, IT'S ALL--

--WORTH IT.

KRAKOOM

HA HA HA

HA HA HA HA HA

OH, THAT IS TOO MUCH.

COME ON, POP...

I'M SORRY. YOU'RE RIGHT, SON. IT'S JUST--YOU AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS. YOU NEVER CEASE TO AMAZE ME, RANDY. WHERE DO YOU *FIND* THESE WOMEN?

I REALLY THOUGHT WE HAD SOMETHING *SPECIAL.*

YEAH--'TIL THE PART WHERE SHE SLASHED THE TIRES ON YOUR BIKE.

SHE'S JUST...GOT A TEMPER.

YOU ALWAYS DID HAVE A THING FOR THE FIERY TYPE.

WELL, *LISTEN,* IF YOU WANT YOUR *OLD MAN'S* ADVICE--I SAY GIVE IT ANOTHER CHANCE.

REALLY?

SURE. IT SOUNDS LIKE THIS ONE'S GOT IT *PRETTY BAD* FOR YOU. SOMETIMES THE TRUEST LOVE BURNS HOT AND COLD. *YOU* NEED SOMEONE WHO WILL KEEP YOU ON YOUR TOES ANYWAY.

AND LORD KNOWS *I* COULD USE THE *ENTERTAINMENT.*

ROBBIE!

ROBBIE ROBERTSON! THERE YOU ARE!

JONAH...

I SHOULD'VE *KNOWN* YOU'D BE HERE. THIS ALWAYS *WAS* OUR OLD SPOT.

WELL, THIS IS THE *BUGLE'S* SPOT, YES.

SAY, I'M LUCKY TO HAVE RUN INTO YOU--I'VE BEEN WANTING TO *CATCH UP*, SHARE ALL THE BIG NEWS. YOU SAW THE *SPIDER-MAN* STUFF, RIGHT?

YEAH... I SAW IT...

IT'S *HUGE*, ROBBIE--MY BEST IDEA YET! RANDY--BY THE WAY--GOOD TO SEE YOU, RANDY.

YOU TOO, MR. J.

YOU KNOW, YOUR DAD COULD'VE HAD *THREATS AND MENACES* FOR A *SONG* BACK IN THE DAY--NOW *LOOK* AT IT! WOW, YOU REALLY HAVE SOME *EGG* ON YOUR FACE THERE!

YEAH, *SOMETHING* LIKE THAT.

BUT LISTEN, I DON'T WANNA GLOAT. *TOO* MUCH. I'D LOVE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT A PARTNERSHIP. WE'VE GOT SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE VISITING OUR SITE--THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT A NEWSPAPER *IS*.

SO I WAS THINKING WE COULD ADD THESE LITTLE *POP-UPS*, TEXT PIECES FROM *BUGLE* ARTICLES.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

YOUR POPS KNOWS WHAT POP-UPS ARE, RIGHT, RANDY?

YEAH... JONAH...

...I DON'T THINK THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.

YOU DON'T... WAIT, *WHAT?*

LOOK, I'M VERY HAPPY FOR YOU. IT SEEMS LIKE THE CULTURE FINALLY CAUGHT UP TO YOUR... *SENSIBILITIES.*

BUT THAT'S NOT REALLY THE KIND OF THING WE DO AT THE *BUGLE* ANYMORE.

WHAT KIND OF THING? *SELL PAPERS?* BECAUSE YOU CERTAINLY DON'T SEEM TO BE DOING *THAT* MUCH THESE DAYS.

NOW, JONAH, THERE'S NO NEED TO BE *RUDE--*

RUDE?! I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S RUDE--YOU ALWAYS ACTING LIKE YOU'RE SO MUCH *BETTER* THAN ME!

I NEVER SAID THAT--

PLEASE. I KNOW WHAT YOU THINK. ROBBIE ROBERTSON, THE *JOURNALIST'S* JOURNALIST, ALWAYS LOOKING DOWN ON J. JONAH JAMESON, THE *MUCKRAKER!*

WELL, I THINK YOU'RE JUST *JEALOUS!*

YOU CAN'T *STAND* THAT PEOPLE ARE CHOOSING *MY* CUTTING-EDGE MEDIA PLATFORM OVER *YOUR* STODGY OLD DINOSAUR OF A PAPER!

I GIVE THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY *WANT,* ROBERTSON!

WOW. THAT GUY HASN'T CHANGED.

NO. NO, HE HAS *NOT.*

HE LIKES THE PURPLE TOY THE BEST--THAT'S ***REGINALD.*** BUT HE USUALLY BRINGS THE ORANGE ONE WITH HIM ON WALKS-- THAT'S ***ARTHUR.*** AND REMEMBER--

SNIFF

SNIFF NEVER, ***EVER*** FEED HIM AFTER MIDNIGHT!

HEY MAN, IT'S GONNA BE OKAY.

THANKS FOR PET-SITTING, MJ.

DON'T MENTION IT, SPIDEY.

AND DON'T WORRY, FRED. ME AND THIS LITTLE GUY ARE GONNA HAVE A GREAT TIME.

AREN'T WE, WIDDLE GOGGY-WOGGY?

MRRR MMRRR--

AND IT'S JUST FOR A WEEK OR SO. LONG ENOUGH FOR US TO GET THIS SITUATION WITH FISK SETTLED.

I KNOW, SPIDEY, I GET IT. IT'S JUST--

I'MMA MISS HIM SO MUCH!

I'M REALLY SORRY, FRED-- I KNOW THAT WAS TOUGH. BUT HE'LL BE SAFE WITH MJ.

I KNOW. CERTAINLY SAFER THAN STICKING WITH *US*...

THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.

FISK ONLY WENT AFTER GOG BECAUSE OF *ME*.

I'M TRYING TO DO THE RIGHT THING AND STOP THE KINGPIN--

--BUT IT SEEMS LIKE THE MORE I TRY TO *HELP*, THE MORE THE PEOPLE AROUND ME *SUFFER!*

I'M SORRY, SPIDEY, I'M SURE YOU CAN'T RELATE. BUT KNOW THIS--

--I'M GONNA GET SOME *PAYBACK!*

FISK MIGHT BE *MAYOR*, BUT HE'S STILL JUST A *CRIMINAL* WITH A SUPERCOOL *ASCOT*.

AND CRIMINALS ARE A *COWARDLY, SUPERSTITIOUS LOT*, NO MATTER HOW *WELL-DRESSED* THEY ARE. SO I WILL BECOME WHAT HE FEARS THE *MOST*. YES, FATHER, I WILL BECOME--

OBOY.

--A BOOMERANG!

I HAVE HIM NOW.

HIS *ANGER* WILL MAKE HIM *RECKLESS.*

AND HIS *GUILT* WILL *ISOLATE* HIM.

BUT THEN, *YOU* KNOW ALL ABOUT FALLING INTO TRAPS, DON'T YOU, *DEMON?*

YES, YOU SEE, THEN... THERE'S *ALWAYS* A CONTINGENCY.

ANOTHER WAY TO GET WHAT I *WANT.* WHEN I HAVE THE *TABLETS*, I WONDER IF *YOU'LL* REGRET ANYTHING...

"HOW YOU *SCORNED* ME...

"HOW YOU MADE ME *BEG.*"

NOW IT'S ALMOST TOO LATE.

REMEMBER, WHEN *HIS* TIME RUNS OUT--

"--SO DOES *YOURS.*"

TIME TO GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD!

3RD AND BOWERY, JAMES! AND *STEP* ON IT.

WHAT'S *THERE,* BOSS?

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SOME BUSINESS *AND* PLEASURE.

SEE, BOOMERANG'S GOT TWO ROOMMATES. AND FISK MADE IT CLEAR THE ONE--THIS ***PETER PARKER*** GUY--IS STRICTLY OFF-LIMITS.

BUT THE OTHER ONE, HE DIDN'T SAY *NUTHIN'* ABOUT.

AND THAT ONE LOOKED FAMILIAR. SO I DID SOME DIGGIN', AND IT TURNS OUT HE'S NONE OTHER THAN THE SON OF THAT OL' THORN IN MY SIDE--

"--ROBBIE ROBERTSON."

HOW WAS LUNCH?

LOUD. I RAN INTO J. JONAH JAMESON. *THAT* MAN--

YOU KNOW WHAT? IT DOESN'T MATTER. I'M NOT GONNA LET HIM GET UNDER MY SKIN.

CLEARLY.

WE NEED TO JUST DO OUR JOBS, BREAK A BIG STORY...

WELL, SOME GOOD NEWS ON *THAT* FRONT...

WE PUT SOME FREELANCE CAMERAS ON OUR NEW ***BEETLE,*** LIKE YOU SUGGESTED--

SHE POP UP ALREADY?

ON A ROOFTOP, LOWER EAST SIDE.

COMMITTING ***MULTIPLE FELONIES,*** I HOPE.

ONLY IF YOU COUNT ***PUBLIC INDECENCY.*** I GUESS SHE WAS MEETING UP WITH HER ***BOYFRIEND.***

HM. HE MIGHT BE ANOTHER LEAD. YOU TAKE A LOOK YET?

DIDN'T WANNA SPOIL IT FOR YOU.

THANKS, GLORY.

LET'S SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT...

HERE, BOSS.

THIS *DUMP*? HEH.

THEY'RE ON THE *TOP FLOOR*, RIGHT? LET'S TAKE THE *FIRE ESCAPE*. COME IN THROUGH THE SKYLIGHT.

FIRST WE GET THE ROBERTSON KID, THEN HOLD HIM HOSTAGE 'TIL *BOOMERANG* SHOWS.

ONCE WE GOT MYERS, WE *OFF* ROBERTSON, SEND HIS OLD MAN CRYING.

THEN ALL THAT'S LEFT IS COLLECTING FISK'S REWARD. I'M GONNA RUN THIS TOWN.

WELL, NOT JUST *ME*.

WAIT UNTIL I TELL MY--

...SON?

--DAUGHTER?

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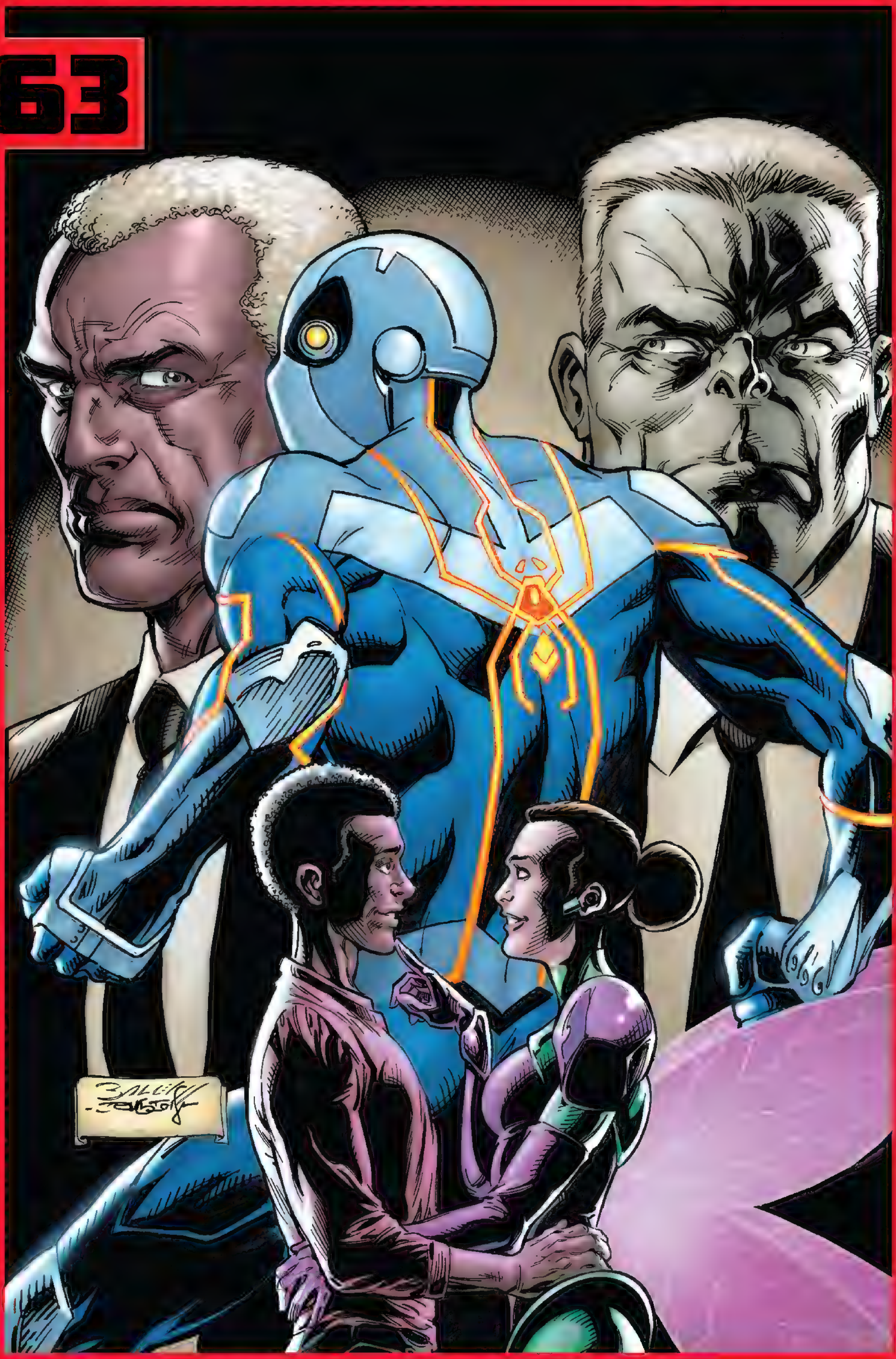

KING'S RANSOM PART 1

RAVENCROFT.

THERE WAS SOMETHING OF A *BREAK-THROUGH* THE OTHER DAY.

WITH *NORMIE*, I MEAN.

AT FIRST, I THOUGHT TRYING TO SALVAGE THAT RELATIONSHIP WAS AS MUCH A LOST CAUSE AS *OUR OWN.*

BUT THEN I SHOWED HIM THIS PHOTO OF US...

DO YOU REMEMBER THIS DAY?

OF COURSE NOT.

JUST KNOW, HARRY-- I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING--

--ANYTHING AT ALL--TO GO BACK TO THAT DAY.

TO BEFORE I...

YOU MUST *BELIEVE* ME, SON.

I DIDN'T KNOW...

THE *FOOL.* HE THINKS NO ONE CAN OVERRIDE THE SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS OF HIS HOSPITAL.

HE FORGETS THAT RAVENCROFT BELONGS TO *WILSON FISK.*

AS DOES THE PRISONER IN HIS CHARGE.

THIS IS YOUR DEMON, THEN? THE ONE YOU CALL *KINDRED?*

THAT'S THE ONE. I'D THOUGHT YOU MIGHT RECOGNIZE HIM, GIVEN ALL YOUR *EXPERTISE* IN THIS AREA--

--BARON MORDO.

THE HELLS ARE BIG PLACES, KINGPIN. I MAY NOT KNOW ALL THEIR DENIZENS, BUT LUCKY FOR *YOU*--

--I DO KNOW WHAT MAKES THEM *BLEED.*

I'M MORE INTERESTED IN MAKING HIM *TALK.*

WHEN NEW YORK WAS TRAPPED IN DARKNESS*, YOU AND I FOUND OURSELVES AT ODDS. BUT NOW IT SEEMS OUR *INTERESTS* MAY ALIGN.

*BACK IN *SECRET EMPIRE.* --NL

OH, THE *TABLET OF DEATH AND ENTROPY* INTERESTS ME A GREAT DEAL, MAYOR FISK.

AND IT CAN BE *YOURS* FOR A SIMPLE PRICE. THE TABLET IS A MEANS TO AN END FOR ME.

THIS *KINDRED* CAN GIVE ME WHAT I WANT JUST AS EASILY--PROVIDED HE'S *WILLING* TO GRANT MY REQUEST.

AND YOU'D LIKE ME TO HELP YOU *CONVINCE* HIM.

VERY WELL, THEN. I DO SO LOVE A *CHALLENGE.* I MUST WARN YOU, THOUGH--

"--THINGS COULD GET VERY *UGLY.*"

THWANG

BANG

KRAK

OKAY, THINGS ARE GETTING PRETTY UGLY.

WE'VE BEEN MAKING SOME REAL *PROGRESS*, BOOMERANG AND I, ON FINDING THE LIFELINE TABLET FRAGMENTS BEFORE WILSON FISK DOES.

BUT LATELY IT SEEMS LIKE WE'VE BEEN RUNNING INTO A LOT OF--

--OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE.

THWIP

IN THIS CASE, *HAMMERHEAD* AND HIS CRONIES.

BOFF

FRED-- UP THERE!

I SEE IT! DON'T WORRY, SPIDEY--

FRONK

--I'M ON IT!

GO, GO, GADGET BOOTS!

SMEK

UNNGH-- KNEE?

UNFF-- STUPID MYERS. ALWAYS FORGET ABOUT THE *BOOTS.*

GUESS IT'S JUST YOU AND ME NOW, WEBS!

FWOOM

WHICH IS NOT THE PARTNERSHIP I'M *LOOKING* FOR. BUT THEN AGAIN--

--MY JUDGMENT IN THAT DEPARTMENT'S BEEN *OFF* LATELY.

GOT IT, PAL! NOW, LET'S BLOW THIS JO!--

SO WHAT COULD BE *WORSE* THAN A MOB BOSS TRYING TO KILL YOU AND GET A PIECE OF A MEGA-POWERFUL ANCIENT ARTIFACT? YOU GUESSED IT--

KOOM

--TWO MOB BOSSES TRYING TO KILL YOU AND GET A PIECE OF A MEGA-POWERFUL ANCIENT ARTIFACT.

AND IF THE OWL AND HAMMERHEAD AREN'T ENOUGH--

THE GAME'S AFOOT, GENTLEMEN!

--THANKS TO THE KINGPIN, THERE'S EVEN MORE WHERE *THAT* CAME FROM.

WAIT HERE.

AW, YOU ***SURE*** YOU DON'T WANT HELP RUSHING INTO CERTAIN DEATH?

THWEP

AND IF THINGS WERE HEATING UP WITH US, WELL--

--THAT WAS *NOTHING* COMPARED TO WHAT WAS GOING DOWN BACK AT THE APARTMENT.

OF COURSE, NOT EVERYONE WAS HAPPY ABOUT *THAT,* EITHER.

LINCOLN...

ROBERTSON...

LOVE AND WAR--

--MORE IN COMMON THAN YOU'D *THINK.*

NO... NO...

...NO, IT CAN'T *BE...*

YOU OKAY, BOSS? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU SEEN A--

--*GHOST.*

THIS CANNOT BE FOR *REAL.*

GLORY, HAS *ANYBODY ELSE* SEEN THESE PICTURES?

NO...

GOOD. KEEP IT THAT WAY. YOU TELL THE PHOTOGRAPHER TO HOLD ON TO ANY AND ALL COPIES UNTIL I SAY OTHERWISE, *GOT IT?*

YEAH... YEAH, I GOT IT, ROBBIE. BUT WHERE ARE YOU *GOING?*

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

YEAH, BECAUSE *THESE* TWO--

--THEY GOT HISTORY.

NONE OF IT GOOD.

BUT I PREFER TO FOCUS ON THE *PRESENT.*

AT LAST-- BOOMERANG IS *MINE!*

ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S TRYING TO *KILL* US.

WAIT-- *WHOSE?*

THWIP!

GET YOUR WEIRD LITTLE BIRD HANDS OFF 'IM, OWLSLEY!

I WAS HERE FIRST!

WELL, *THAT'S* A LUCKY BREAK.

THIS IS WHY THE MOB NEVER GETS AHEAD, YOU KNOW. THE INFIGHTING. IT'S NOT LIKE THE MOVIES.

IT'S JUST LIKE THE MOVIES.

BANG

BLAM

FEEM

GO, FRED! NOW!

THWIP

WITH HIM *CLEAR* AND THESE IDIOTS BUSY TRYING TO *KILL* EACH OTHER, I'VE GOT JUST ENOUGH OF AN OPENING.

THWIP

THWIP

THE NEW SUIT MEANS I'M MOVING FASTER, HITTING MORE TARGETS--

--MAKING IT ALL LOOK EASY.

THWIJJP

THAT WAS THE *WEB-MUCK*, WASN'T IT?

OF *COURSE* IT WAS THE WEB-MUCK.

BAD GUYS NABBED, FRAGMENT SECURED, AND ALL IN TIME TO GET BACK TO MY--

--ADORING FANS?!

THWIP

THERE HE IS! THE GUY FROM THE LIVESTREAM!

CHEERING CROWDS, SELFIES WITH INSTAGRAM CELEBRITIES-- I'M STILL GETTING USED TO THIS.

THERE HE IS!

YEAH, STILL GETTING USED TO *THIS*, TOO.

SMILE FOR THE CAMERA, SPIDEY!

THEY CAN'T SEE ME SMILE, JONAH.

BUT THEY CAN *FEEL* IT!

THEN AGAIN, THIS ISN'T REALLY *JONAH'S* DOING.

NO, CREDIT FOR ALL THIS GOES TO ***NORAH WINTERS.***

OR AT LEAST I ***THINK*** IT'S CREDIT.

I KEEP TELLING MYSELF THIS IS JUST A REFRESH ON ME SELLING PHOTOS TO THE *BUGLE*--BUT IT JUST KEEPS GETTING BIGGER AND BIGGER--

--NOT THAT THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ***UPSIDES. PUBLIC AWARENESS,*** FOR ONE.

NOT ***EVERYONE*** BELIEVES MY SIDE OF THE STORY, BUT LIVESTREAMING THE HUNT FOR THE FRAGMENTS HAS STARTED TO PUT A REAL DENT IN MAYOR FISK'S APPROVAL RATING.

ALSO, THE MEMES ARE SOLID.

WHAT'S ***NOT*** TO LOVE?

AND DON'T FORGET TO JOIN US TOMORROW AT ***7:00*** EASTERN AS SPIDEY HERE DOES HIS VERY FIRST ***A.M.A.!*** SHOULD BE EXCITING!

JONAH, DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT AN A.M.A. ***IS?***

NOPE.

BUT I BET ROBBIE ROBERTSON ***HATES*** IT.

TO BE FAIR, THOUGH--

TOC TOC TOC

--THAT'S TRUE ABOUT *SO MANY* THINGS THESE DAYS.

...DAD? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

RANDY. WE NEED TO *TALK.*

IS EVERYTHING OKAY? YOU LOOK UPSET.

UPSET? RANDY, I WAS UPSET THE FIRST THREE TIMES YOU GOT ARRESTED FOR PROTESTING.

I WAS *UPSET* WHEN YOU DECIDED TO PASS ON GETTING A LAW DEGREE SO YOU COULD GO INTO SOCIAL WORK.

UPSET BECAUSE I WAS *WORRIED* FOR YOU. BUT ALSO VERY, VERY *PROUD.* ALWAYS PROUD.

I TOLD MYSELF, HEY, THAT'S WHAT YOU *GET* FOR RAISING A KID WITH SUCH A BIG *HEART.* SOMEONE WHO REALLY WANTS TO DO SOME *GOOD* IN THIS WORLD.

BOY, WAS I *WRONG* ABOUT ALL THAT.

H-HOW DID YOU *GET* THIS? WERE YOU...*SPYING* ON ME?

NO, SON-- I WAS SPYING ON *HER.*

YOU SEE, I'M AN *INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST,* AND THAT YOUNG LADY YOU'RE *NECKING* WITH THERE--

NECKING?

--IS A *CRIMINAL WE'RE INVESTIGATING!*

OKAY, YEAH--I GET WHY YOU'RE MAD. BUT I *PROMISE*--IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE. I MEAN, IT *IS* WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, BUT--

RANDY, YOU NEED TO *END* THIS.

YOU JUST TOLD ME TO GET BACK *TOGETHER* WITH HER!

THAT WAS *BEFORE* I KNEW SHE WAS A *SUPER VILLAIN!*

YEAH, I'M NOT DENYING JANICE HAS SOME...*ROUGH EDGES.* BUT...SHE'S TRYING TO CHANGE.

RANDY, COME ON--THIS ISN'T JUST SOME SMALL-TIME COSTUMED CRIMINAL. THIS "JANICE" WITH THE ROUGH EDGES IS *JANICE LINCOLN.*

LINCOLN.

THE APPLE DOESN'T FALL FAR FROM THE TREE.

;SIGH; AND NOW WE GET TO WHAT YOU'RE *REALLY* MAD ABOUT.

YOU'RE DARN RIGHT--THIS IS *TOMBSTONE'S DAUGHTER!*

THE MAN WHO MADE MY LIFE A *LIVING HELL* FOR *TWENTY YEARS.*

DAD, I *GET* ALL THAT, I REALLY DO--

--BUT WE'RE OUR *OWN PEOPLE.* JANICE IS NOT TOMBSTONE--AND I AM NOT *YOU.*

YOU GOT *THAT* RIGHT. I WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING THIS *STUPID!*

YOU DON'T EVEN *KNOW* HER!

I KNOW *PLENTY.*

I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE F.E.A.S.T. CENTER AND ALL THE HARD WORK YOU PUT IN THERE ONLY TO SEE HER *BLOW IT UP!*

SHE'S TRYING TO *FIX* THAT!

;SIGH; YOU CAN'T SAVE *EVERYONE,* RANDY. YOU DON'T WANNA LISTEN TO ME? FINE.

LET'S SEE HOW LONG THIS LITTLE ROMANCE OF YOURS LASTS ONCE SHE'S *BEHIND BARS*--WHERE SHE *BELONGS!*

AND IF *THAT* WENT BADLY--

#4-1

--IT WAS NOTHING COMPARED TO HOW THINGS WENT UPTOWN.

BOOM

NO #$%& WAY. YOU HEAR ME?!

NO DAUGHTER OF MINE IS GONNA DATE A ROBERTSON-- YOU HEAR ME?!

UGH.

SMASH

YOU REALIZE THE MORE YOU *COMPLAIN* ABOUT IT, THE MORE *ATTRACTIVE* HE SEEMS, RIGHT?!

YOU'RE LUCKY I DON'T SET THIS THING TO *VAPORIZE!*

HEY, SIRI, PLAY "PAPA DON'T PREACH."

I DUNNO, RANDY...

I THINK YOUR DAD IS RIGHT.

OKAY, *HOLD* UP--PUTTING THAT ASIDE, PETE--I JUST TOLD YOU I'M DATING A *SUPER VILLAIN*, AND YOU BARELY REACTED.

YEAH, ABOUT THAT... I KINDA ALREADY *KNEW*.

WHAT?!

WELL, *SPIDER-MAN* TOLD ME--

SPIDER-MAN KNOWS?!

YEP. HE SAW YOU AND HER, UH--HE DIDN'T *MEAN* TO! HE WASN'T, Y'KNOW, BEING A *SPIDER-CREEP*. IT WAS AN *ACCIDENT*.

SOMETIMES WHEN HE CRAWLS BY WINDOWS, HE SEES THINGS *NO ONE* SHOULD EVER SEE.

BUT WHAT *I* WANNA KNOW IS--

--HOW DID THE TWO OF YOU EVEN *MEET?!*

I MEAN, THIS IS TOO HILARIOUS.

WELL, I'M GLAD YOU ALL ARE SO *ENTERTAINED*.

OH, *COME ON*--THIS IS PRETTY GREAT. BIG-TIME SUPER-CROOK *JANICE LINCOLN* IS DATING A *CIVILIAN?*

A CIVILIAN WHO'S A DO-GOODER SOCIAL WORKER THAT YOUR MOB BOSS DAD HATES BECAUSE OF *HIS* DAD.

HE'S *CUTE*, TOO. I JUST FACEBOOK-STALKED HIM.

I LOVE IT. IT'S LIKE *ROMEO AND JULIET*, IF JULIET ALSO PULLED OFF *JEWEL HEISTS* ON THE SIDE.

AND WE ALL KNOW HOW GREAT *THAT* TURNED OUT.

WHICH BRINGS US BACK TO HOW IT *BEGAN*.

SIGH IT'S ACTUALLY A GREAT STORY...

"YOU SEE, IT ALL STARTED THE NIGHT I TRIED TO *KILL BOOMERANG.*"

...

HEY.

...

HEY.

AKA IXXXIXXX

THAT IS THE MOST *ROMANTIC THING* I HAVE EVER *HEARD.*

THAT'S PRETTY MESSED UP, RANDY.

BUT IF YOU *REALLY* WANT MY ADVICE?

YOU GOTTA *BREAK UP* WITH HIM.

WAIT, *WHAT?*

YEAH. IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME WITH GUYS LIKE THAT.

LOOK, I GET IT. TECHNICALLY SHE'S A *CRIMINAL--*

--BUT SHE'S *NOT.* I MEAN, THE LINE BETWEEN WHAT'S LEGAL AND WHAT'S NOT IS GETTING GRAYER EVERY DAY, AND SHE TRIES TO FIND CREATIVE, FREQUENTLY NONVIOLENT, WAYS TO *EXPLOIT* THOSE VAGUE PARTS OF...

OKAY, I'LL ADMIT, THAT ALL SOUNDS A LOT MORE CONVINCING WHEN *SHE* SAYS IT. I MEAN, HAVE YOU *SEEN* HER? BUT REGARDLESS--

--IT'S NOT GONNA WORK.

HE'S ALWAYS GONNA BE TRYING TO *CHANGE* YOU.

I THINK I CAN HELP HER *CHANGE.*

HATE TO SAY IT, BUT SCORPIA'S RIGHT. SOUNDS LIKE THE DUDE HAS A SERIOUS ***SAVIOR COMPLEX.*** HE'LL ***WHITE KNIGHT*** YOU ALL THE WAY OUT THE DOOR. AND WE GET ***ENOUGH*** OF THAT.

HMPH, I ***AGREE.*** IT'S QUITE SIMILAR TO WHEN ***HAWKEYE*** AND I--

WE ***GET*** IT, LORRAINE. IT HAPPENED ***ONCE.***

RANDY, LISTEN--IF YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT THIS--I HAVE...A LITTLE ***EXPERIENCE*** IN THIS DEPARTMENT.

YOU ***DO?***

TRY NOT TO SOUND SO SURPRISED.

IF YOU'RE REALLY TRYING TO MAKE THIS WORK, YOU HAVE TO BE ***UP FRONT*** ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE OKAY WITH.

LAY DOWN SOME ***GROUND RULES.***

SHOW 'IM WHO'S BOSS.

IT'S THE ONLY WAY.

YOU HAVE TO HAVE A REAL ***TALK*** WITH HER.

YOU GOTTA ***TALK*** TO HIM.

WOW...

GREAT TALK.

SEE, BABY? I TOLD YOU.

WHO *CARES* WHAT OUR FATHERS THINK? OR OUR *FRIENDS?*

ALL THAT MATTERS IS *US.*

UGH, TELL ME ABOUT IT. I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE MY DAD STORMING IN HERE, ACTING ALL *HIGH AND MIGHTY.* ACTING LIKE HE KNOWS *EVERYTHING.* I TOLD HIM YOU WERE *REFORMING--*

WAIT-- *WHAT?*

YEAH, YOU KNOW, LIKE WE *TALKED* ABOUT.

RANDY-- THAT IS *NOT* WHAT I SAID.

I'VE *EXPLAINED* THIS-- THE LINE BETWEEN WHAT'S LEGAL AND ILLEGAL IS GETTING GRAYER BY THE DAY, AND WHAT *I* DO IS *EXPLOIT*--

LA LA LA, DON'T LOOK AT HER WHEN SHE SAYS IT--

UNBELIEVABLE.

HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

CLEARLY *NOWHERE WITH YOU.* WHICH IS *YOUR LOSS,* BUDDY--

--BECAUSE WHAT *WE* JUST DID? IS *ALWAYS* BETTER AFTER YOU'VE JUST ROBBED A BANK.

DID-- DID YOU JUST *ROB A BANK?*

AND NO ONE GOT HURT! SEE? THE SYSTEM WORKS!

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS... DAD WAS *RIGHT.* YOU'RE *NEVER* GONNA CHANGE.

AND MY *FRIENDS* WERE RIGHT. ALL YOU'RE GONNA DO IS TRY TO *CHANGE* ME.

YOU'RE A *CRIMINAL!*

AND YOU'RE A *SOCIAL WORKER!* IF I CAN SEE PAST *YOUR* FLAWS, WHY CAN'T YOU SEE PAST *MINE?*

YOU KNOW WHAT, MAYBE WE SHOULD--

FREEZE AND COME ALONG *QUIETLY?*

NAH, YOU WERE GONNA SAY SOMETHING ELSE.

UH... ARE THESE FRIENDS OF YOURS?

NO.

GET DOWN, SWEETIE.

BLEESH

KRAK

CRIME *MASTER*, RIGHT? THOUGHT YOU WERE WORKING *STATEN ISLAND* THESE DAYS.

LOOKING TO *EXPAND*. EASY NOW, *LITTLE GIRL*, WE DON'T WANNA HURT--

PLANS--

SKASH

--THEY'RE GREAT 'TIL YOU GET PUNCHED IN THE FACE, RIGHT?

ONE MORE PIECE TO GO.

'COURSE, THAT'S NOT COUNTING ALL THE PIECES *KINGPIN* HAS...

I TOLD YOU, FRED. LET ME--AND *SPIDER-MAN*-- WORRY ABOUT THOSE.

YOU JUST LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU GET THAT *LAST VISION* FROM THE OLD CLERK GIVING US A LOCATION-- ANYTHING YET?

NOTHING. IT'S GONNA BE *BEAUTIFUL*, THOUGH. AIN'T IT?

IT SURE IS.

MAN, I GOTTA ADMIT-- THIS FEELS GOOD. MY CHANCE TO FINALLY DO SOMETHING *RIGHT.*

MY CHANCE TO BE A *HERO.*

STILL, GOTTA ADMIT--

SKAM

--I DID *NOT* SEE *THAT* COMING.

THIS ONE IS NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH.

WHOA. MADAME MASQUE. OKAY. BIG FAN. BIG, BIG FAN. I MEAN, SERIOUSLY, YOU'VE BEEN A ROLE MODEL AND AN INSPIRATION TO ME FOR SO MANY YEARS, NOT JUST BEING AN INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL FEMALE MOB BOSS, BUT ALSO HAVING TO DO ALL THAT FROM THE SHADOW OF A SUCCESSFUL FATHER IN THE SAME INDUSTRY--

--AND FOR YOU TO SAY, ABOUT ME, THAT I'M "NOT ONE TO BE TRIFLED WITH" IS REALLY JUST AN INCREDIBLE HON--

KRAK

I MAY BE GETTING SOFT IN MY AGE, GIRL--

--BUT NOT *THAT* SOFT.

ALL RIGHT, THEN, LET'S GET THESE TWO--

RANDY?

YOU DECENT? MAN, HAVE *WE* GOT--

--A STORY TO TELL.

IT'S HIM.

IT'S THEM!

IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE!

FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
FWASH
BOOOOM

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KING'S RANSOM PART 2

SPEAK.

I KNOW I'VE BEEN QUIET LATELY.

I SUPPOSE I JUST HAVEN'T FOUND THE RIGHT *WORDS.*

SPEEEAAAK...

AND I UNDERSTAND... YOU DON'T LIKE HOW I LEFT THINGS.

BUT THAT'S NO REASON TO BE *ANGRY.* THEN AGAIN--

--I SUPPOSE *I'M* NOT ONE TO TALK.

SPEAK!

FISK, WHAT THE *DEVIL* ARE YOU *DOING?!*

RRRRRAAAARRRGGGHHH!

GETTING *RESULTS*, DIRECTOR OSBORN.

APOLOGIES FOR ALL THE NOISE.

WE HAD A *DEAL*, WILSON. THIS IS *MY* PATIENT--

HM, YES...

BUT HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE DOING VERY WELL UNDER YOUR CARE, NORMAN. WE'RE NOT SEEING THE PROGRESS HE *DESERVES*.

SO I BROUGHT IN A SPECIALIST FOR THIS VERY SPECIAL CASE. AND AS YOU CAN HEAR--

--BARON MORDO HAS INDEED MADE QUITE THE *BREAKTHROUGH.*

RRRRRAAAAGGGHH!

THIS ISN'T WHAT WE *AGREED* TO. IF YOU HARM HIM--

"IF," DIRECTOR? NEED I REMIND YOU--

--IT'S ONLY A QUESTION OF *"WHEN."*

AND NOW THAT WE'VE FINALLY OPENED A LINE OF COMMUNICATION, I SUSPECT WE WON'T HAVE MUCH LONGER TO WAIT *AT ALL.*

HE'S RIGHT ABOUT *THAT* PART, AT LEAST.

SOON ENOUGH--

--WE'LL ALL FIND OURSELVES IN OUR *OWN* LITTLE HELLS.

AW, NO... NO, NO, NO...

JANICE... MY LITTLE BABY... WHAT'VE THEY DONE TO--

YOU!

TOMBSTONE! I *KNEW* YOU WERE THE ONE BEHIND THIS--

ROBERTSON?

WHERE'S MY SON, YOU MONSTER?!

I SWEAR TO GOD, IF YOU'VE *HURT* HIM, I'LL--

YOU'LL WHAT?!

GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME, ROBBIE! YOU NEVER WAS ONE FOR FIGHTING.

IS THAT RIGHT? I SEEM TO REMEMBER OUR LAST DUSTUP GOING DIFFERENTLY. MAYBE WE CAN FIND A PITCHFORK SOMEWHERE, HAVE A LITTLE REMATCH.*

I'M NOT A COLD-BLOODED MURDERER LIKE YOU, LINCOLN, THAT'S TRUE-- BUT IF YOU'VE TOUCHED ONE HAIR ON RANDY'S HEAD--

*THE ORIGINAL MATCH TOOK PLACE WAAAAAAY BACK IN THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #157! --NL

OH, LAY OFF IT! I DIDN'T DO NOTHIN' TO YOUR BOY--MUCH AS I WOULDA LIKED TO WHEN I FOUND OUT HE WAS FOOLIN' AROUND WITH MY LITTLE PRINCESS!

YOU THINK I WAS THRILLED ABOUT THAT MYSELF?! I TOLD HIM TO STAY AWAY FROM HER. SAID SHE WAS NOTHING BUT A VICIOUS CROOK LIKE HER OLD MAN--

HEY, WATCH IT-- I MEAN, THANK YOU.

I TRIED TO WARN HIM IT WAS ONLY A MATTER TIME BEFORE--

YOU REALLY THINK I DID THIS?! LOOK AROUND, SMART GUY--THEY TOOK MY JANICE TOO!

EVEN IF IT WASN'T YOU, I BET YOU'RE WRAPPED UP IN IT SOMEHOW-- DIRTY MOB BUSINESS.

OH YEAH? OR MAYBE SOMEBODY ELSE IN MY "DIRTY MOB BUSINESS" GOT TIRED OF YOU SNOOPIN' AROUND AND DECIDED TO GO AFTER YOUR KID AS PAYBACK--

OKAY, THAT'S ENOUGH!

THWIP

THWIP

IF *ANYONE'S* GONNA BLAME THEMSELVES FOR THIS, IT'LL BE *ME*, FELLAS.

KINDA MY THING.

SPIDER-MAN! WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING HERE?!

ME? I LIVE-- *UH*--JUST DOWN THE STREET. GOT HERE WHEN THE *ATTACK* HAPPENED. SO I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS FOR *BOTH* OF YOU.

RANDY AND JANICE ARE ALL RIGHT. OR AT LEAST, THEY WERE THE LAST TIME I *SAW* THEM. WHOEVER TOOK THEM GOT AWAY. I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE HAVE--

--SO MAYBE WE DON'T WASTE TIME *ARGUING* WITH EACH OTHER?

I MEAN, I GET IT--THERE'S A LOT OF *BAD BLOOD* HERE. ON A NORMAL DAY, TOMBSTONE, I'D BE ON MY SEVENTEENTH PUNCH BY NOW.

THUP

AND *YOU*, ROBBIE--WELL, I ACTUALLY REALLY ADMIRE AND RESPECT YOU. BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT. THE *POINT* IS WE ALL CARE ABOUT THE PEOPLE IN DANGER HERE.

I *KNOW* IF WE PUT OUR HEADS TOGETHER, WE CAN *SAVE* THEM. FOR STARTERS--

--MAYBE YOU CAN HELP ME FIND THE PEOPLE WHO *DID* THIS.

AS FOR *WHAT* THEY DID--

--WELL, THAT'S A WHOLE *OTHER* STORY.

HOURS AGO

MAKE SURE YOU'RE JUST SET TO *STUN!*

FA-THEEW FA-THEEW FA-THEEW FA-THEEW FA-THEEW FA-THEEW FA-THEEW

WHICH IS *VERY* NICE OF THEM.

FRED, *GET BACK!*

NO, PETE, *WAIT*, I CAN *TAKE 'EM! I'LL PROTECT YOU--*

AND WEIRDLY ENOUGH--

>UNFF<

THUNCH

--I KINDA HAD THE SAME IDEA.

FA-THEEW

HATE TO DO THAT TO FRED, BUT WITH HIM OUT LIKE A LIGHT--

FA-THEEW FA-THEEW FA-THEEW FA-THEEW

--I CAN DO A QUICK COSTUME CHANGE WHILE I'M OUT OF SIGHT.

RRNNNNN

VERY QUICK, THANKS TO THE NEW UNSTABLE MOLECULES MAKING UP MY SUIT.

BEATS CHANGING IN AN *ALLEYWAY*, I GOTTA ADMIT.

WHERE'D THEY GO?

YOU MEAN THE PREVIOUS TENANTS? LOOKS LIKE THEY BOLTED.

YOU FELLAS HERE FOR THE OPEN HOUSE TOO?

FA-THEEW

FA-THEEW

FA-THEEW

FAIR. COMPETITION FOR DECENT APARTMENTS IN MANHATTAN CAN GET PRETTY *INTENSE*--

THWIP

--BUT AT LEAST SIGN THE *LEASE* BEFORE YOU *TRASH* THE PLACE! THAT'S MY--

FA-THEEW

--POLICY.

SMEK

CRIME MASTER.

KRAK

ANOTHER ONE.

TR
KU
M

SERIOUSLY, WHAT MAKES THESE GUYS KEEP ADOPTING *FAILED* SUPER-VILLAIN IDENTITIES?

THUMP

I MEAN, THE REP *HAS* TO BE OUT THERE, I'VE ALWAYS BEATEN WHOEVER'S BEHIND THAT MASK EASILY--

KRAK

--ENOUGH.

ZUNAP

HER ON THE OTHER HAND-- MADAME MASQUE--

--SHE'S A HEAVY HITTER.

LET'S GO.

=NNF= I'D LOVE TO-- BUT I SEEM TO BE STUCK.

ONLY FOR THE TIME BEING.

NO. TEMPTING, BUT IT WOULD ONLY COMPLICATE THINGS.

WE STICK TO THE PLAN.

PLAN? WHAT--

OH. THAT PLAN.

ONE EXPLOSIVE CHARGE--

--TWO HOSTAGES--

--AND A COUPLE SEMI-TRIUMPHANT BADDIES LATER--

--I WAS STILL *STUCK.*

C'MON, SPIDEY. THIS SUIT'S GIVING YOU A LITTLE MORE POWER--

--USE IT!

FWASH

HURRY UP, IDIOT. THEY'RE GETTING--

--AWAY.

MADAME MASQUE AND CRIME MASTER, HUH?

SEE? MOB BUSINESS.

NOW HOLD ON, I BARELY KNOW THESE JERKS!

ACTUALLY, LET ME SEE THAT. I MIGHT--

YEAH... I THOUGHT THIS LOOKED FAMILIAR. I'VE GOT A SOURCE WHO MIGHT BE IN BUSINESS WITH THESE JOKERS, WHOEVER THEY ARE.

OH, SEE? SNOOPIN' BUSINESS...

YEAH, WITH A WHOLE ARMY OF HIGH-TECH GOONS. I KNOCKED THAT OFF ONE OF THEIR SUITS. HOPING IT MIGHT LEAD US SOMEWHERE.

GETTING HIM TO TALK WON'T BE EASY THOUGH.

YOU LEAVE THAT TO ME.

GREAT. I DON'T WANNA HEAR ANY MORE, FOR LEGAL REASONS. YOU TWO GO CHASE ROBBIE'S CONTACT, SEE WHAT YOU CAN FIND.

HEY, WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOIN'?!

TO GET SOME BACKUP!

BECAUSE, YEAH--

--WE *ALL* NEED SOMEBODY TO HELP US SOMETIMES.

I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS.

YEAH, ME TOO.

LIKE WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO WHEN *SPIDER-MAN* FINDS US AND KICKS YOUR SORRY #$%&?!

HONEEEEY, *PLEASE--*

YOU'RE *EMBARRASSING* ME IN FRONT OF THE *KIDNAPPERS.*

I APOLOGIZE. THIS IS ALL A LITTLE *NEW* TO HIM. HE'S A *CIVILIAN.*

WHICH, I KNOW, I KNOW, *NOT* THE BEST IDEA IN OUR PROFESSION, BUT-- WELL, THE HEART WANTS WHAT IT WANTS, RIGHT?

BY THE WAY, SPEAKING OF *UNLIKELY PAIRINGS,* I HAVE TO ASK...

CRIME MASTER? REALLY?

I MEAN, I'M NOT TRYING TO QUESTION YOUR CHOICES, HE'S JUST-- A BIT OF A *JOURNEYMAN.*

I WOULD'VE THOUGHT IF YOU WERE FORMING ALLIANCES, YOU MIGHT HAVE LOOKED TO PAIR UP WITH ANOTHER *WOMAN.*

OH FOR *GOD'S SAKE!*

TJUMP

ENOUGH!

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE THE MOST *MADDENINGLY IRRITATING HOSTAGE* I HAVE *EVER TAKEN!*

WOW, WELL, EXCUSE *ME* FOR THINKING YOU MIGHT SEE THE MUTUAL BENEFITS OF A *MENTORSHIP--*

YOU'RE OF PLENTY BENEFIT, GIRL.

THE TWO OF YOU REPRESENT QUITE THE *WINDFALL* FOR US, I'M HAPPY TO REPORT.

WELL, YOU GUYS ARE OUTTA LUCK. I AM COMPLETELY OUT OF THE LOOP ON FRED AND PETE'S WHOLE *TABLET SCAVENGER HUNT* THING.

WE DON'T CARE ABOUT THE TABLET.

WAIT--YOU *DON'T?*

DID YOU ALL NOT NOTICE WE WEREN'T EXACTLY *BOTHERED* THAT WE DIDN'T GET TO NAB YOUR PAL BOOMERANG BACK AT YOUR APARTMENT?

WE'RE NOT INTERESTED IN THE KINGPIN'S PRIZE-- WE'RE INTERESTED IN THE *CHAOS* IT INCITES.

OOH, TELL ME MORE.

I MEAN-- *YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH THIS!*

ACTUALLY, THIS IS THE *ONE TIME* WE *WILL.* SEE, MAYOR FISK RUNS A TIGHT SHIP. NO TURF WARS OR POWER GRABS TOLERATED IN THE CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD.

WHICH IS A PROBLEM FOR AN UP-AND-COMER LIKE *ME.*

OR SOMEONE WHOSE FAMILY'S PRIMARY HOLDINGS ARE A BIT TOO FOCUSED ON THE *WEST COAST,* LIKE MYSELF.

BUT NOW THAT THE KINGPIN IS LETTING *EVERYBODY* IN ON THE CHASE, COMPETITIVE SPIRITS ARE GONNA RUN HIGH AND ALL.

AND *WITH* THEM, CONSIDERABLY MORE PERMISSIVENESS WHEN IT COMES TO *BLOODSHED.*

SO WHEN, *FOR INSTANCE*, WE KIDNAP THE ROOMMATE OF FRED MYERS AND HIS GIRLFRIEND, WHO WE CERTAINLY COULD *NEVER* HAVE KNOWN WAS THE DAUGHTER OF *TOMBSTONE*--

--AND THE MAN HIMSELF SHOWS UP IN A *FIT OF RAGE*--

--WE COULD *HARDLY* BE BLAMED FOR ANY VIOLENCE THAT ENSUED FROM THE MISCOMMUNICATION. WE WERE SIMPLY TRYING TO DO OUR BELOVED MAYOR'S *BIDDING*.

AND AS FOR LINCOLN'S TERRITORIES PAST 125TH STREET--WELL, OF *COURSE* WE'D BE WILLING TO STEP IN AND KEEP THINGS RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

WE ARE *NOTHING* IF NOT *TEAM PLAYERS.*

HE WOULD'VE *WANTED* IT THAT WAY.

LIKEWISE, IF THE NEWSPAPER-OWNING FATHER OF THE ROOMMATE IN QUESTION *DIED.*

NEW OWNERSHIP MIGHT LOOK KINDER ON OUR *CIVIC EFFORTS.*

UH, OKAY, BUT--AND I MEAN NO *DISRESPECT* HERE--ONE SMALL PROBLEM--

YEAH. OUR DADS HAVE *NO IDEA* WHERE WE ARE.

AN INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST AND AN ENTERPRISING MOB BOSS?

I'M *PRETTY* SURE THEY CAN FIGURE IT OUT IF THEY PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER.

HH--OUR DADS? PUT THEIR *HEADS* TOGETHER?

YOU *REALLY* SHOULD'VE DONE YOUR *HOMEWORK* THERE.

UH-UH, NOPE. NO WAY!

MIRAGE--DESMOND--COME ON. I'M JUST LOOKING FOR A LITTLE INFORMATION.

THAT'S ALL YOU'RE EVER LOOKING FOR! I TOLD YOU, I GOT IDEAS!

WHO WOULDN'T WANT A REGULAR OPINION COLUMN FROM A WORKING SUPER VILLAIN, ROBERTSON? WHAT ABOUT OUR SIDE OF THE STORY?!

I'LL CONSIDER IT. BUT RIGHT NOW--

RIGHT NOW, NOTHING! THE LAST TIME I TALKED TO YOU, YOU ALMOST GOT ME KILLED! FOR A THIRD TIME!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WE DIDN'T NAME YOU IN THAT STORY!

"A SOURCE CLOSE TO THE OWL'S OPERATIONS"?! HEY, HERE'S A NEWSFLASH FOR YA--THE GUY ONLY HAD TWO HENCHMEN AT THE TIME, AND THE OTHER ONE WAS DEATH ADDER--

--WHO DOESN'T EVEN TALK!

LOOK, I APOLOGIZE FOR THAT. BUT THIS ISN'T FOR A STORY--IT'S ACTUALLY PERSONAL.

THEN THAT'S EVEN MORE OF A PASS. NO OFFENSE, ROBBIE, BUT THIS IS A WORK RELATIONSHIP. I'M WRITING THESE DRINKS OFF, EVEN!

NOW, SEE, DESMOND, THAT'S WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO DO--

--YOU'D RATHER BE TALKING TO ME THAN HIM.

WAIT! I'LL TALK!

THEY GOT A SHOP UPTOWN, *REAL MONEY* BEHIND THE OPERATION. THEY'RE OFFERING *POWER UPGRADES*, CUTS OF TERRITORY, *FREE DENTAL*. THEY GAVE ME A CARD WITH AN ADDRESS--

VERY GLAD TO HEAR IT.

I'D DO IT *FAST* THOUGH.

GOD, I HOPE IT DIDN'T JUST FALL OUT OF MY POCKET.

DO I HAVE THE RIGHT BUILDING?

NO, THIS IS *DEFINITELY* THE SPOT.

BUT--

--NO *FRED.*

I PUT HIM UP HERE WHILE HE WAS STILL KNOCKED OUT, AND NOW HE'S GONE WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A--

...NOTE.

OKAY, WELL, AT LEAST THAT BEATS THE ALTERNATIVES. *WHY*, THOUGH...?

DON'T NEED SPIDER-SENSE TO GET THE FEELING IT'S NOTHING *GOOD.*

Dear Pete--

Looks like we got lucky and our pal, Spider-Man, rescued us, huh? That's a relief--

--but I can't keep counting on luck anymore.

Truth is, I've had a lot of it lately.

Meeting you and becoming the best friend you've ever had, for instance.

I can feel it starting to run out now though.

Don't get me wrong, I've loved this whole adventure, finding the tablet with Spidey--

--but more and more, I'm putting the people I care about in danger.

Sweet Aunt May, Gog, now Randy-- enough is enough.

God forbid something happened to you, Pete, the most helpless and powerless of all of us. I'd never forgive myself!

So I need you to trust me on this, buddy. I've had a vision, telling me where the last fragment is. But don't you or Spidey try to find me--

OH NO...

FRED--

"--WHAT ARE YOU *THINKING?*"

--I have to do this alone.

65

KING'S RANSOM PART 3

CHANGE IS DIFFICULT.

MOST OF US ARE WHO WE ARE, TO THE BITTER END.

RAAAAARRRR!

MUSIC TO THE EAR, ISN'T IT, DIRECTOR?

BUT EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, THERE'S A ROADSIDE CONVERSION--

--AND A MOMENT OF REVELATION.

FATHER... PLEASE...

IN THAT MOMENT, THOUGH, WE HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE.

WE HAVE TO EMBRACE SALVATION.

ENOUGH!

OR *DAMNATION* AS IT WERE.

...OSBORN?

I WILL NO LONGER TOLERATE THIS INTRUSION ON MY INSTITUTION, MR. MAYOR.

I UNDERSTAND THE PRESSURES YOU FACE IN REGARDS TO YOUR LATEST...*ACQUISITION.* BUT WITH YOUR GOAL IN SIGHT, ASK YOURSELF--

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO CHANCE MY INVOLVEMENT AT THIS CRUCIAL HOUR?

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE GOBLIN'S ABILITY TO SOW CHAOS, WILSON. AND FROM WHAT MY CONTACTS IN THE UNDERWORLD TELL ME, YOU'VE UNLEASHED PLENTY OF THAT ON YOUR OWN LATELY.

=SIGH= MORDO--

--RELENT.

ONE DAY, NORMAN. THAT'S ALL I'LL GIVE.

AS YOU SAID-- THE CRUCIAL HOUR DRAWS NEAR. ONCE IT'S PASSED, THERE'LL BE NO NEED FOR THIS CONTINGENCY--

--AND THE DEMON WILL BE SENT BACK TO HELL. USING *CONVENTIONAL* METHODS.

HARRY!

I *HEARD* YOU. THE OTHERS--THEY *COULDN'T?*

YOU HEARD, YES-- BUT DID YOU *LISTEN?*

I ASKED YOU FOR THAT HELP MY *ENTIRE* LIFE.

WHAT DID I RECEIVE IN *RETURN,* NORMAN?

AND WHY WOULD I EVER BELIEVE...

...THAT THIS TIME WAS ANY *DIFFERENT?*

THEN AGAIN--

--MAYBE THINGS CHANGE MORE THAN I'D CARE TO ADMIT.

THIS IS THE PLACE?

COME ON, ROBBIE. YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SHAKE A GUY UPSIDE DOWN OVER A ROOFTOP FOR INFORMATION?

I TEXTED MY CONTACT. HE SAYS SPIDEY'S ON HIS WAY, BUT--

WE AIN'T *WAITING*, YEAH. YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE HOLDING NOTHING BUT YOUR *PRESS PASS*, THOUGH.

TAKE *THIS.*

I'M NOT A KILLER LIKE YOU, LONNIE. OR YOUR DAUGHTER, THOUGH I GUESS I SHOULDN'T BLAME HER SINCE THAT'S WHAT *YOU RAISED* HER TO BE.

HEY NOW--YOU WATCH YOUR *MOUTH.* I DIDN'T WANT MY JANICE TO BE INVOLVED IN *ANY* OF THIS. I WANTED HER TO BE A *LAWYER!* NOT LIKE SHE'D EVER LISTEN TO *ME.*

HEH.

WHAT?

IT'S JUST--I CAN *RELATE.* WHATEVER I TRIED TO TELL RANDY TO DO, HE WAS ALREADY HALFWAY IN THE *OTHER* DIRECTION. THEN AGAIN--

--MAYBE IF I'D *LISTENED* MORE, HE WOULDN'T BE IN THIS MESS.

TELL ME ABOUT IT. I WAS SO *MAD* WHEN I FOUND OUT ABOUT HER DATING YOUR SON, I PUSHED HER AWAY.

MAN--BEING A DAD. IT'S THE *WORST,* RIGHT?

EXCEPT WHEN IT'S THE *BEST.*

NOW COME ON. LET'S GET IN THERE BEFORE--

WHAT THE--?!

BOOM, JERKS--

--YOU JUST GOT *MIRAGE'D!*

MY NEW *PARTNERS* HERE HOOKED ME UP WITH SOME *FANCY POWER UPGRADES*, SO IT'S NOT JUST *ME* DOING THE MIRAGE-ING.

BET THAT COLUMN DOESN'T SOUND LIKE SUCH A BAD IDEA *NOW*, ROBERTSON!

THERE THEY ARE--

I *SEE* 'EM!

JANICE!

WAIT!

AGGH!

GENTLEMEN, PLEASE.

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU TO DIE A BIT MORE *QUICKLY.*

YEAH. WE'RE ON A SCHEDULE.

MADAME MASQUE. YOU MESSED UP THIS TIME, LADY.

I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, SPIDER-MAN IS ALREADY ON THE WAY!

MR. ROBERTSON, LOOK AT MY FACE.

DO I *LOOK* WORRIED TO YOU?

I'M *WORRIED.*

ROBBIE SENT ME THE LOCATION OF MASQUE AND CRIME MASTER'S HIDEOUT, BUT IT'S *WAY* UPTOWN.

WHY DO I ALWAYS THINK I CAN GET EVERYWHERE WITH *WEBS?* THE *SUBWAY* MIGHT BE FASTER THAN THIS.

POINT IS, THIS IS ALL GOING--

GREAT!

THIS IS GREAT TV!

JONAH, FOR THE LAST TIME, THIS ISN'T TV. IT'S STREAMING.

IT'S BETTER THAN CHRISTMAS IS WHAT IT IS! SPIDER-MAN RESCUING ROBBIE ROBERTSON, THE EDITOR OF THE *DAILY BUGLE*, AS AN EXCLUSIVE FOR MY THREATS AND MENACES!

YOU'RE ASSUMING I RESCUE HIM. AT THIS PACE--

HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT IN TIME. AND IF YOU'RE WONDERING HOW I KNOW THAT, I MADE SURE TO TRACK HIS LOCATION--

--USING THIS VERY HANDY *THREATS AND MENACES* "FIND YOUR SUPER HERO" APP.

PLENTY OF TIME TO DISPOSE OF FOUR BODIES, I'D ARGUE.

SIGH JONAH...

HEH. GONNA BE A LOT MORE THAN FOUR.

SORRY?

ROBERTSON AIN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO CALLED FOR BACKUP.

THE SYNDICATE!

KR-KRACK

FZZZZZZ

LEWSH

K-KRUNCH

YOU--YOU ALL CAME TO *RESCUE* ME?!

OF COURSE WE DID--WE'RE *SISTERS!*

AND YOUR DAD IS PAYING US A *HUGE* SUM OF MONEY.

THOOOP

DADDY!

I'M COMIN', PRINCESS!

AND HE'S NOT *ALONE!*

POP!

THE TWO OF YOU ACTUALLY DID THIS *TOGETHER?* I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

BELIEVE IT, SWEETIE. ROBERTSON AND ME TALKED IT OVER ON THE WAY HERE--

WE WERE *WRONG.*

IF YOU TWO LOVE EACH OTHER--

--WHO ARE WE TO GET IN THE WAY OF *THAT?*

YOU REALLY THINK *REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY* IS GONNA WORK HERE?

FINGERS CROSSED.

NO, NO, NO--

THAT'S NOT HOW THE STORY GOES. YOU GOT TWO *STAR-CROSSED LOVERS*--THEY GOTTA END UP--

THWEPPED? IS THAT THE LINE?

MAN, ME AND SHAKESPEARE. I CAN NEVER KEEP IT STRAIGHT.

MY GIRLFRIEND WOULD KILL ME.

LADIES-- YOU MIND IF I JOIN IN THE RESCUE?

KRASH

SMASH

I CANNOT *BELIEVE* WE GOTTA TEAM UP WITH HIM AGAIN!

FZZZZZZZZ

AND THIS TIME IT'S GONNA BE ALL OVER THE INTERNET!

THE COMMENTS ARE GONNA BE BRUTAL.

THWIP

HEY, I GET IT-- THIS ISN'T GOOD FOR THE BRAND.

BUT AS SOMEONE WHO STRUGGLED ON THAT FRONT FOR *YEARS*, TAKE IT FROM ME--THE PUBLIC CHANGE THEIR MINDS *ALL THE TIME.*

YOU JUST FOCUS ON DOING YOUR JOB--

POWICH

THWEP THWEP THWEP

--AND GIVE 'EM A GOOD SHOW.

THWEP

SCHLANG

KRAK

THOOP

THAAD

KRAK

TZZZZZ

BWASH

SCHLANG

THAK

FZZZZZZZZ

SUPPOSE IT'S *YOU AND ME*, THEN, BEETLE.

YOU GOT *THAT* RIGHT, RICH GIRL.

I CAME TO YOU AS A PEER, AS AN *ALLY*--AND *THIS* IS HOW YOU TREAT ME?! WELL, ENOUGH'S ENOUGH.

KWOOSH

I GUESS WHAT THEY SAY IS TRUE-- NEVER MEET YOUR HEROES. OR, YOU KNOW, *VILLAINS*. WHO CARES? POINT IS--

SWAAMM

--*THIS* IS FOR NOT ACCEPTING MY LINKEDIN REQUESTS!

I'M STARTING TO GET WHAT YOU *SEE* IN HER.

INSPIRING STUFF, RIGHT?

BWUD

PEOPLE LEARNING HOW TO CHANGE THEIR WAYS.

GIVING SOMETHING OTHER THAN *FIGHTING* A CHANCE.

WHOOSH

ME, I'VE BEEN FEELING LATELY LIKE I CAN'T CHANGE *ANYTHING.*

THUNK

LIKE NOTHING I DO *MATTERS.*

KRAK

SO, THIS? A GOOD, CLEAN WIN?

FLAK

THAT FEELS PRETTY *GREAT* RIGHT NOW. YEAH...

ZHAM

DID I SAY *WIN?*

ODD. I THOUGHT I'D BE HAPPY TO STILL BE ALIVE.

LEMME KNOW WHEN IT'S *SAFE* TO TURN AROUND.

SO I'M GUESSING THIS IS GONNA BE *ALL OVER* THE INTERNET? THAT'S NOT SO GREAT.

YEAH. LISTEN, ROBBIE-- I'M SORRY--

NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE, SPIDEY. I STOOD BY *PLENTY* OF TIMES WHILE JONAH PULLED THIS KINDA STUNT ON YOU.

BUT FRIENDLY ADVICE--JUST... BE CAREFUL.

WITH JONAH, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT'S GONNA COME *NEXT.*

WE'RE MOVING IN TOGETHER!

D-DIRECTOR OSBORN.

I--I'M REALLY SORRY, SIR. I CAN'T LEAVE THIS POST. MAYOR'S ORDER.

HRM. YES. THE ***MAYOR.*** HE DOES TECHNICALLY HAVE PURVIEW OVER THIS PLACE, DOESN'T HE?

OF COURSE, HE BARELY EVEN KNOWS HIS WAY AROUND. WHY, I IMAGINE HE COULD ***NEVER*** FIND THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES--

--MUCH LESS THE ***PERSONNEL FILES,*** WITH ALL THOSE HOME ADDRESSES AND NEXT OF KIN DETAILS...

EXCELLENT CHOICE, GUARD.

O-OSBORN? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

THE SAME THING ***YOU*** DO, DEAR PATIENT-- A CHANCE TO HELP YOURSELF--

--AND YOUR ***NEIGHBOR.***

MEANWHILE, ***ME?***

I CAN'T EVEN HELP MY *ROOMMATE.*

IT'S OKAY, TIGER. YOU'LL FIGURE IT OUT.

I DON'T KNOW *HOW*, MJ. I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE FRED *IS*-- AND ALL I HAVE TO GO ON IS THIS NOTE.

AND A REALLY SLOBBERY *BOOMERANG.*

YEAH--GOG SURE DOES *LOVE* THAT THING. GUESS ANYTHING THAT'S GOT FRED'S *SCENT* ON IT.

WAITASECOND-- MJ, *THAT'S IT!*

GOG! C'MERE, BOY. YOU KNOW THIS SCENT? HELP ME FIND IT.

SNIFF

-GOOOO?

FINALLY, A *LEAD.* GOG CAN TRACK FRED DOWN. PROBLEM IS, WITH EYES ALL OVER THE CITY--

THAT'S IT. NOW WHERE'D HE--

--KINGPIN'S BOUND TO FIND HIM *FIRST.*

TARGET ACQUIRED, MR. MAYOR. NOW, FOR GOD'S SAKE--

--CAN I *PLEASE* FINALLY *KILL HIM?*

THIS FIGHT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING.

FISK HAS TURNED LOOSE *EVERY* CRIME LORD IN THE CITY.

HE'S WILLING TO DO *ANYTHING* TO GET THE REST OF THE *LIFELINE TABLET.*

I HAVE TO FACE REALITY. THERE'S *NO WAY* I CAN DO THIS ALONE.

IF I'M GONNA SAVE FRED, I'M GONNA NEED *BACKUP.*

SERIOUS BACKUP.

GIANT SIZE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: KING'S RANSOM VARIANT BY DAVID BALDEON & ISRAEL SILVA

GIANT-SIZE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN **KING'S RANSOM** CONCLUSION

WAIT, LET ME SEE IF I GOT THIS--YOU WANT US TO HELP YOU SAVE...

...BOOMERANG?

I HATE THAT GUY.

YEAH, I MEAN, AS MUCH AS I LOVE A *NEW AVENGERS* REUNION--OR IS IT A *DEFENDERS* REUNION?

CAN'T BE DEFENDERS. I NEVER DID THAT.

YEAH, YOU DID.

AH, HELL. YOU'RE RIGHT.

POINT IS, STILL GOTTA DRAW THE LINE SOMEWHERE.

I GET IT. I REALLY DO...

...BUT YOU ALL HAVE TO *BELIEVE* ME--

"--HE'S CHANGED."

AND IT'S TRUE.

BOOMERANG HAS CHANGED.

IT WASN'T OVERNIGHT.

IT WASN'T EASY.

BUT THESE DAYS, FRED IS A FRIEND. (NO ONE IS MORE SUPRISED THAN ME.)

AND HE'S IN TROUBLE. I HAVE TO FIND HIM.

THANKFULLY, I HAD SOME *HELP* IN THAT DEPARTMENT.

GOG LED ME HALFWAY ACROSS TOWN, CHASING FRED'S SCENT, TILL IT FINALLY BROUGHT US--

--RIGHT BACK HERE.

THIS IS WHERE BOOMERANG AND I FOUGHT ALL THOSE VERMIN TO GET A FRAGMENT AND FOUND GOG IN THE *FIRST PLACE.*

AND TURNS OUT THE LAST FRAGMENT WAS IN THE SAME PLACE THE WHOLE TIME. *INFURIATING.*

ON THE PLUS SIDE, I FIGURED AT LEAST I KNEW--

--WHAT I WAS GETTING INTO.

OR GETTING *OUT* OF...

EVERY CRIME BOSS IN THE CITY WAS SUDDENLY PULLING UP, SURROUNDING THE ONLY GOOD ENTRANCE TO THAT TUNNEL SECTION.

NO WAY I COULD GET THROUGH ALL OF THEM--AT LEAST NOT *IN TIME.*

THANKFULLY, THESE TYPES ALWAYS MANAGE TO GET IN THEIR *OWN* WAY.

BACK OFF, MISTER SHINY-- HE'S *MINE.*

=SIGH= NORMALLY I'D DELIGHT IN SHOWING YOU HOW WRONG YOU ARE, *SILVERMANE--*

--BUT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN PLAYING FISK'S GAMES. ALLOW *ME* TO SUGGEST--

--HE'S *ALL* OF OURS.

WHAT ARE YOU *GETTING AT,* LI?

THERE'S A *REASON* KINGPIN ALERTED ALL OF US TO BOOMERANG'S LOCATION. HE WANTS US ALL TO *KILL EACH OTHER* TO WIN THIS "GET OUT OF JAIL FREE" CARD.

SO WHAT IF, INSTEAD, WE MADE THIS A JOINT VENTURE--*PROFIT-SHARING?*

YOU REALLY THINK I WOULD TRUST THE LIKES OF *YOU?*

YEAH-- BESIDES, *NO WAY* AM I MAKING THAT KIND OF DEAL WITHOUT MY *LAWYERS* PRESENT.

SO...THEY MADE THEIR LAWYERS PRESENT.

TALK ABOUT *CRIMINALS.*

BUT WHILE *THEY* ARGUED OVER THE FINE PRINT, IT GAVE *ME* TIME.

FIRST, TO GET MJ TO KEEP AN EYE ON GOG DURING WHAT CAME NEXT--

--AND *THEN* TO CALL SOME OLD PALS FOR ASSISTANCE.

/// DING

AW, NO.

FROM THERE, ALL THAT WAS LEFT TO DO WAS *WATCH* AND *WAIT.*

UNFORTUNATELY, LUKE AND THE OTHERS WEREN'T THE *ONLY* ONES ON THEIR WAY.

MAYOR FISK, I DO HAVE TO *WARN* YOU, WE'RE GETTING NUMEROUS REPORTS OF GANG PRESENCE AT THE SCENE.

YOU'RE NEW TO OUR TEAM, DOCTOR CAREY, SO I'LL OVERLOOK IT THIS ONCE, BUT REMEMBER--YOU'RE PAID FOR YOUR EXPERTISE IN ANCIENT LEMURIAN TECHNOLOGY.

LEAVE *PUBLIC SAFETY* TO ME.

OF COURSE, SIR. IT'S JUST--

--TRANSPORTING YOUR PIECES OF THE TABLET TO A *POTENTIAL WAR ZONE...*

IT'S QUITE DANGEROUS.

YES... AND SO AM I.

"WE GOTTA STOP THE KINGPIN."

YOU MEAN YOUR BEST PAL *WILSON FISK?*

GUYS, C'MON. YOU DON'T ACTUALLY *BELIEVE* THAT WHOLE P.R. CAMPAIGN. DOES THAT EVEN *SOUND* LIKE ME?

THAT DEPENDS ON HOW *YOU* DEFINE *YOU.*

YEAH, MAYBE YOU GOT YOUR BRAIN SWAPPED WITH *DOC OCK.*

OR MAYBE YOU GOT CORRUPTED BY AN *ALIEN SYMBIOTE.*

OH, I GOT ONE-- MAYBE *KRAVEN THE HUNTER* STOLE YOUR *COSTUME--*

SENSING A *THEME* HERE.

IT'S ALWAYS *SOMETHING* WITH YOU, IS THE THEME.

YEAH. AND MAYBE PEOPLE WOULDN'T BE SO QUICK TO BELIEVE THE *WORST* ABOUT YOU--

--IF YOU EVER REPLIED TO AN *EMAIL.*

OR, YOU KNOW, CAME TO ONE OF THE REUNION DINNERS.

WAIT, THERE HAVE BEEN *REUNION DINNERS?*

IT WAS IN THE EMAIL.

OOF. THEY'RE NOT WRONG.

I'VE BEEN SO BUSY WITH ONE CATASTROPHE AFTER ANOTHER--

--I'VE LET A LOT OF GOOD FRIENDSHIPS GO.

HEY, YOU'RE BUSY. NOBODY GETS THAT LIKE WE DO.

BUT YOU TAKE THE LONER ACT TO A WHOLE NEW *LEVEL* SOMETIMES.

WHAT HE'S *TRYING* TO SAY IS--

--WE'RE *ALWAYS* HERE FOR YOU.

USUALLY.

SO...YOU GUYS WILL HELP ME?

OF *COURSE* WE WILL, BUB.

YEAH, I MEAN, WHAT WERE WE GONNA DO-- LET ALL THOSE CROOKS DOWN THERE BEAT EACH OTHER UP?

THAT'S OUR JOB. I WAS JUST WAITING FOR LUKE TO SAY--

--AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!

OKAY, I'LL ADMIT--

THWIP

--THIS FEELS GOOD.

PNPH

MAYBE NOT *THIS* PART, SURE.

BUT BEING PART OF *THIS* TEAM AGAIN, WITH *THESE* PEOPLE?

YONK

THAT'S SOMETHING I'M GLAD I'M HERE FOR.

SPIDEY, GET OUT OF HERE!

PONPH

;SIGH; YEAH, MY OLD FRIEND IS RIGHT, SADLY.

THWIP

MY NEW FRIEND NEEDS ME, TOO.

AND OF COURSE IT STRIKES ME--THIS IS A LOT TO DO FOR SOMEONE WHO USED TO BE MY *ENEMY.*

BUT THEN--

SPLOSH

THIS IS IT, BOY! WE'VE *MADE* IT!

--I GUESS THESE THINGS CHANGE.

WE'VE ARRIVED!

JONAH? WHY IS THERE ALL THAT BACKGROUND NOISE?

HAD TO WORK REMOTE. YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE HAVING A BIG DAY, YOU KNOW.

J. JONAH JAMESON IS ABOUT TO GET WHAT HE SO RICHLY DESERVES--

--A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

CLAP CLAP

CLAP CLAP

WHOOO!

CLAP CLAP

YEAH!

LET'S GOOO!

THAT'S RIGHT! WELCOME, ALL OF YOU-- REPORTERS, FANS, SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENTIALS--

--TO THE FIRST-EVER *TNM* LIVE!

TNM IS THE HOTTEST NAME IN ENTERTAINMENT--

--EVER SINCE WE FORMED OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

TNM Viewership

AS YOU CAN SEE, *TNM* HAS HIT HISTORIC HIGHS. AND MOST IMPORTANTLY--

AUDIENCE

--WE'RE *TROUNCING* THE COMPETITION!

SAY IT WITH ME--

Daily Bugle TNM

PRINT! IS! DEAD!

BUT J. JONAH JAMESON IS NOT ONE TO REST ON HIS LAURELS! NO SIR!

ME AND MY INTREPID TEAM OF WOEFULLY UNDERCOMPENSATED NEW MEDIA EMPLOYEES HAVE SOMETHING ***SPECIAL*** TO UNVEIL FOR YOU TODAY.

YOU'VE ***THRILLED*** TO SPIDER-MAN'S ADVENTURES VIA LIVESTREAM!

YOU'VE ***UPVOTED*** AND ***COMMENTED*** AND ***REPOSTED*** HIS EVERY MOVE!

NOW WE'RE GOING TO TAKE YOU ONE STEP FURTHER!

NOW YOU CAN JOIN SPIDEY OUT THERE, FIGHTING CRIME! WITH--

--THE PRO-SPIDER SLAYERS!

YEAH, I HAVE NO CLUE.

BUT THE *REST* OF THE CITY SURE DID.

AS PEOPLE ALL OVER THE CITY LOGGED ON TO HELP REMOTE-PILOT JONAH'S DRONES AND "HELP" THEIR HEROES.

NOW, GIVE *THREATS AND MENACES* CREDIT.

THEY PROGRAMMED THESE THINGS TO BE ENTIRELY *NONLETHAL.*

BUT THE A.I. RESTRICTIONS AROUND *PROPERTY DAMAGE?* NOT SO MUCH.

AND OF COURSE, GIVEN THE *NATURE* OF THESE THINGS--

--IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY TURNED ON *EACH OTHER.*

YEAH, NOT JONAH'S FINEST HOUR. THEN AGAIN--

--WE'RE ALL HAVING A ROUGH DAY.

I MEAN, I STILL HAVEN'T FOUND--

FRED!

FRED! WAIT!

LEAVE ME ALONE, SPIDEY!

LIKE I TOLD PETE IN THE NOTE--

--I GOT THIS!

I DON'T GOT THIS.

I GOT YOU.

CAN'T EVEN GET *THIS* PART RIGHT. *UNBELIEVABLE.*

FRED, *COME ON,* YOU'RE BEING TOO HARD ON YOURSELF.

YEAH? WHAT DO *YOU* KNOW? YOU'RE LIKE THE BEST SUPER HERO IN THE WORLD. YOU GOT YOUR WHOLE *LIFE* PUT TOGETHER.

ME? ALL I CAN EVER DO IS PUT THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT IN DANGER.

IT FEELS LIKE THE MORE I TRY TO FIX THINGS, THE MORE I SCREW THINGS UP.

LIKE NO MATTER WHAT I DO, I CAN NEVER *WIN.*

SIGH

I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH, FRED.

YOU *DO?*

YEAH. I'VE LOST PEOPLE, AND *ALMOST* LOST PEOPLE MORE TIMES THAN I CAN BEAR TO THINK ABOUT. AND I KNOW PUTTING ON THIS COSTUME HAS HAD *PLENTY* TO DO WITH IT.

AND I'VE BLAMED MYSELF AND TRIED TO ISOLATE MYSELF TO KEEP EVERYONE WHO'S STILL AROUND ME SAFE. BUT I'M LEARNING--

--*NONE* OF US CAN LIVE LIKE THAT.

WE *NEED* PEOPLE IN OUR LIVES. OTHERWISE, WHAT ARE WE EVEN *DOING* THIS FOR? POINT IS--

--YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

HE'S RIGHT, FRED.

YOU *AIN'T* ALONE!

YEAH. YOU'VE GOT THE ***BOOMERANG REVENGE SQUAD*** TO KEEP YOU COMPANY.

SORRY, SPIDEY-- WE GOTTA FINISH THE HEART-TO-HEART SOME OTHER TIME. I GOT DISGRUNTLED *EX*-EMPLOYEES TO DEAL WITH!

EMPLOYEES? WE WERE ***PARTNERS!***

WE'VE BEEN ***OVER*** THIS! JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE ***EQUITY*** DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE A ***PARTNER,*** HERMAN!

KROK

TW-KROK

SWA-WA-WA-WA

NOW, WHAT DO YOU SAY ME AND YOU POWER THROUGH THAT RUBBLE AND FINISH THIS--

--TOGETHER?

THWEP

THWEP

FUNNY HOW A TEAM-UP FIXES PRETTY MUCH *ANYTHING*, RIGHT?

BUT I STILL DON'T GET IT--WHAT ABOUT *FISK'S* PARTS OF THE TABLET?

I *TOLD* YOU--

"--LEAVE THAT TO ME."

THIS IS *MADNESS.* WE MUST HURRY--

DOCTOR CAREY!

PREPARE THE--

DOCTOR CAREY?!

OR RATHER, LEAVE IT TO THE

BLACK CAT

--MAKING A SPECIAL DELIVERY.

WE USED TO DATE.

WE *REALLY* DIDN'T.

BUT I FIGURE THE LESS WE TALK ABOUT ALL *THAT*, THE BETTER.

I'LL MEET YOU BACK AT THE RENDEZVOUS POINT!

GREAT PLAN, BUT FOR *NOW*, I GOTTA GET THROUGH THE RUBBLE FROM THE *LAST* MESS WE MADE DOWN HERE...

...AND FIND WHAT WE'VE BEEN AFTER ALL THIS TIME.

OF COURSE, JUST LIKE EVERY *OTHER* TIME YOU THINK THIS THING IS COMING TO AN END...

BEHOLD, I HAVE WHAT YOU SEEK.

THE LAST FRAGMENT OF THE *LEMURIAN TABLET OF LIFE AND DESTINY!*

YOUR QUEST MAY FINALLY BE AT AN END--

--IF YOU CAN PASS THE *TEST.*

WAIT, DID HE SAY *TEST?* DID YOU *KNOW* ABOUT THIS?

NOPE... BUT I'M GUESSING IT ISN'T GOING TO BE *MULTIPLE CHOICE.*

YOU HAVE PROVEN YOUR *SKILL* AND YOUR *CUNNING*, YOUR *DOGGEDNESS* AND DETERMINATION, BY ASSEMBLING THE REST OF THE FRAGMENTS.

NOW YOU MUST PROVE YOU ARE WORTHY OF *WIELDING* IT. STEP FORWARD, AND TRY TO TAKE IT FROM MY HANDS. LET ME LOOK INTO YOUR HEART. ONLY A *TRUE HERO* CAN CLAIM IT. FOR ALL ELSE--

--A *CERTAIN DEATH.*

CERTAIN... *DEATH?*

WHEW.

=SIGH= OKAY, WELL, HERE GOES--

--NOTHING?

THWIP

SPIDEY, WHAT--WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?*

FRED, *COME ON.* WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU *STOLE* SOMETHING?

YOU MEAN *TODAY?*

I THINK *I* SHOULD HANDLE THIS PART.

NO CHANCE! I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU RISK YOUR *LIFE--*

AND *THAT* TELLS ME EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW.

YOU'VE COME A *LONG WAY,* BOOMERANG.

AS FAR AS *I'M* CONCERNED, YOU'RE A *HERO,* ALL RIGHT?

BUT RIGHT THIS SECOND, MAYBE WE DON'T PUT IT TO *TOO* MUCH OF A TEST?

THEN AGAIN...

...I HAVEN'T *FELT* LIKE MUCH OF ONE LATELY, EITHER.

KINDRED--*HARRY*--HE DID A VERY GOOD JOB REMINDING ME OF ALL THE WAYS I MAY HAVE *HURT* MORE THAN I'VE *HELPED* AS SPIDER-MAN. AT LEAST WHEN IT COMES TO THE PEOPLE I LOVE.

LETTING MY ANGER TAKE CONTROL.

NOT LISTENING TO THE VOICE INSIDE MY HEAD THAT SAYS--

THIS IS IT, MY BOY!

JONAH!

DON'T YOU *SEE?* THIS IS YOUR *BIG CHANCE!*

FOR YEARS, THEY SAID YOU WERE A *THREAT!* A *MENACE!* A *CRIMINAL!*

YOU SAID THAT!

AND NOW YOU CAN PROVE IT'S *NOT* TRUE!

YOU CAN LIVESTREAM TO THE WORLD AND LET THEM ALL SEE, ONCE AND FOR ALL-- *SPIDER-MAN* IS A *HERO!*

NO.

BECAUSE THIS IS THE OTHER THING--

--I'VE ALWAYS HAD A CONFLICTED RELATIONSHIP WITH MONEY.

BEEN THAT WAY SINCE I SOLD MY FIRST PHOTOS TO THE *BUGLE*.

MAYBE ***NONE*** OF IT WAS EVER OKAY, BUT AT LEAST IT NEVER WORKED OUT FOR ME. AT LEAST IT WAS ALWAYS STILL A STRUGGLE.

ALL THIS SUCCESS, THE FAME, THE BIG CHECKS. HOW LONG--

--UNTIL I'M MAKING THE SAME ***MISTAKES?***

I DON'T KNOW IF I'M A ***HERO***. BUT I'VE SEEN ENOUGH OF THEM TO KNOW--

--THE KEY IS TO ***KEEP TRYING*** TO BE ***BETTER.***

I--I'M SORRY, JONAH. I APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO DO TO HELP ME, I REALLY DO--

--BUT I GOTTA DO THIS *MY* WAY.

OKAY, MISTER WIZARD. BEFORE YOU *EVALUATE* ME, I SHOULD PROBABLY ALSO COME CLEAN ABOUT THAT TIME I FORGOT TO RETURN THOSE VIDEO TAPES--

YOU...

...PASS.

ARE YOU SURE THIS IS *IT?*

YEAH, TURNS OUT--

KRAK

--THIS *IS* IT.

SPEED DEMON. HOW DID *HE* GET LOOSE?

AND *SHOCKER!* BUT--

SHZZZZZZZ

FWAM

--WHERE'S *FRED?*

THWIP

SHZZZZ

FWANG

KRAK

SPLASH

FWAAASH

OH--

SPLOSH

--THERE HE IS.

PETER-- HEY-- EASY--

FELICIA...

YOU WEREN'T AT THE RENDEZVOUS POINT, SO I CIRCLED BACK. FOUND YOU UNCONSCIOUS DOWN IN THE TUNNELS.

I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO DO, SO I BROUGHT YOU BACK *HERE*.

THROUGH THE GIANT HOLE IN YOUR WALL.

FRED!

LONG GONE, I'M AFRAID--

--BUT HE DID LEAVE A *NOTE*.

NOT AGAIN.

To Spidey -Tor Pete

Dear Spidey--

You know, it's not cool to read someone else's mail. It's actually a federal offense!

Anyway, I betrayed you. Really sorry about that. But on the plus side--

--at least I finally get to come clean.

A lot of what I told you was true--the old city archivist really did come to me, trying to enlist me to find the Lifeline Tablet fragments.

Trouble for him was I'd already been enlisted to help find the Lifeline Tablet fragments--

--by Willie Fisk himself.

See, Fisk suspected the Archivist was holding out on him, so he set a trap, letting the old guy overhear him after a department meeting--

--and it worked.

So, see, the part where the Archivist cast the spell that put all the fragment locations in my head, that was true.

--but it was no coincidence.

HE GAVE IT UP?

YEAH. EASY AS--

SMASH!

And so was the part about the Kingpin's men ambushing us right after--

I want you to know, Spidey--I had nothing to do with the old guy getting murdered.

That was all Fisk's goons.

HEY! YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO *THAT!* YOU COULD'VE LET HIM LIVE IN SHAME!

YOU--YOU *LIED* TO ME. YOU *TRICKED* ME!

SURE, S'TRUE, OLD-TIMER. BUT--*I* DIDN'T JUST *BLOWTORCH* YOU! YOU GOTTA *PRIORITIZE* YOUR GRUDGES!

HEH. THE JOKE'S ON YOU--

WHEN I CATALOGUED THE LAST FRAGMENT, I CAST ANOTHER *SPELL* ON IT--

--AN *ENCHANTMENT* DICTATING THAT ONLY A *TRUE* AND *SELFLESS HERO* COULD SECURE IT. IF ANYONE ELSE WERE TO TRY, IT WOULD MEAN--

--CERTAIN DEATH.

After that, negotiations between me and Fisk hit a real snafu.

I mean, okay, there was some disagreement on the compensation package, but more importantly--

WE HAD A *DEAL*, MYERS!

--I needed to not get certain death'ed.

Which meant if I was gonna get my hands on that last fragment, I needed help. I needed--

--a hero.

And I knew just the one.

Trick was figuring out how to get you to help me. But then I got lucky--

--when Spider-Man's pal, Peter Parker, posted an ad looking for a roommate.

What better way to get to the Web-Head than through his friends?

So I turned on my legendary charm. And in no time at all--

--we bonded. I earned his trust--

--and your trust, too.

Before I knew it we were working together, side by side, to put together the tablet.

I don't want you to think it was all an act, Spidey.

To Spidey
—For Pete

But at the end of the day, I'm me.

And you're you. Besides...

It was only a matter of time before someone we both care about gets hurt.

It's just business, Spidey...

This was the only way I could get my life back.

TO BOOMERANG!

STILL CAN'T BELIEVE YOUR PLAN *WORKED*, FRED. AND FOR ONCE, THE PLAN DIDN'T INVOLVE ME GETTING *MURDERED* SOMEHOW!

THAT'S RIGHT, FREDDIE BOY--YOU'RE BACK WHERE YOU BELONG!

YEAH...

BACK WHERE I BELONG.

UH-OH...

YOU GUYS KNOW I HAVE A SECRET IDENTITY, RIGHT?

WE TOLD YOUR NEIGHBORS WE'RE HERE TO EVICT THE TENANTS WHO KEEP GETTING ATTACKED BY SUPER VILLAINS.

OKAY, GUYS--I *KNOW*, I KNOW WHAT I SAID. I KNOW I *VOUCHED* FOR HIM.

AND HEY, I *GET* IT, THIS IS *BAD*. THE KINGPIN WON THIS ROUND. BUT...APPARENTLY HE'S JUST USING THE TABLET TO BRING BACK HIS DEAD WIFE.

THAT'S PROBABLY NOT THE *END OF THE WORLD*, RIGHT?

DO *YOU* WANT TO TELL HIM?

ALL I HAVE EVER WANTED IS TO HAVE YOU WITH ME AGAIN, VANESSA.

THE PAIN OF LOSING YOU-- NOT *JUST* LOSING YOU, BUT NOT EVEN BEING ABLE TO *BE THERE* WITH YOU WHEN YOU *DIED*--

--NOT EVEN BEING ABLE TO SAY *GOODBYE*--

"--IT BROUGHT ME TO MY KNEES."

FOR YEARS, I SEARCHED FOR A WAY--*ANY* WAY-- TO BRING YOU BACK.

AND WHEN IT LED ME TO THE DEMON *KINDRED*, I THOUGHT AT LAST I'D FOUND THE ANSWER.

BUT JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER TIME, IT TURNED OUT THAT ANSWER WAS--

NO.

I WAS *ANGRY.* REFUSING TO ACCEPT IT.

BUT IT WAS WHAT THE DEMON SAID *NEXT* THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK SHE EVEN *WANTS* TO COME BACK TO YOU?

AND I REALIZED...

...HE WAS *RIGHT.*

THAT IF I WERE ABLE TO DO THE *IMPOSSIBLE*-- TO BRING SOMEONE BACK TO *LIFE*-- YOU WOULD NEVER FORGIVE ME--

--FOR CHOOSING *YOU.*

I HAVE TO LET YOU GO, VANESSA. I--I HAVE TO MOVE ON WITH MY LIFE.

BUT TO DO SO, I MUST KNOW YOUR SPIRIT HAS FOUND *PEACE.*

YOU DIED OF A BROKEN HEART, BECAUSE OF SOMETHING YOU DID, OUT OF LOYALTY AND LOVE...FOR *ME.*

"SOMETHING NO MOTHER SHOULD *EVER* HAVE TO DO.*

*BACK IN DD VOL. 2, #31. --NL

"BUT TODAY, I WILL MAKE THAT *RIGHT.*

"I WILL TRY TO ATONE FOR ALL MY SINS THAT BROUGHT YOU SO MUCH PAIN AND DESTROYED OUR FAMILY.

"INSTEAD OF SATISFYING MY OWN SELFISH DESIRES, I WILL HONOR YOUR *DYING WISH.*

"TODAY, YOUR SON'S LIFE IS RESTORED.

"TODAY, *THE ROSE* BLOOMS ONCE MORE."

HELLO, DADDY.

LIKE I SAID BEFORE...

IT WON'T BE LONG NOW.

WE'LL *ALL* BE TOGETHER AGAIN SOON, AND ONCE WE *ARE*...

WELL, *TRUST* ME, IT'LL BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM *LAST* TIME.

ALL THAT'S LEFT--

--IS TO INVITE OUR FINAL *GUESTS.*

NO... NO...THIS CAN'T BE *RIGHT!*

FOR *MONTHS* I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THE ANSWERS. THE SHADOWS AROUND THE GAPS IN MY MEMORY.

THEY LED ME *HERE.*

TO ANOTHER *DEAD END!*

RELAX, DOC--

--I *PROMISE* IT'LL MAKE SENSE SOON.

WHO'S THERE?! *SHOW YOURSELF!*

I WISH I COULD, OTTO. BUT RIGHT NOW YOU'LL HAVE TO CONSIDER THE DISTINCT POSSIBILITY--

--THAT I MIGHT JUST BE A VOICE IN YOUR *HEAD.*

AHHHHH!

THERE, THERE, NOW. NO NEED TO FIGHT.

THIS IS ALL A *NECESSARY* PART OF THE PROCESS.

FUMP

LIKE I SAID BEFORE...

...OUR OWN LITTLE HELLS.

CONTINUED IN...

SINISTER WAR

#61 TWO TONE VARIANT BY MICHAEL CHO

#62 VARIANT BY DUSTIN WEAVER

#62 MAN-THING 50TH ANNIVERSARY VARIANT BY GREG LAND & FRANK D'ARMATA

#63 DESIGN VARIANT BY DUSTIN WEAVER

#63 HEROES REBORN VARIANT BY CARLOS PACHECO, MARIANO TAIBO & MATT MILLA

#64 HEROES REBORN VARIANT BY CARLOS PACHECO, RAFAEL FONTERIZ & RACHELLE ROSENBERG

"Leaves you looking forward to what comes next in Spencer's run on this series."
— Comic Book Revolution

THE RETURN OF ONE OF THE MOST

DANGEROUS ARTIFACTS IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE!

THE LIFELINE TABLET has plagued Spider-Man's life more than once. Mayor Wilson Fisk wants its secrets, and he'll happily kill Boomerang to get his hands on the stone! But he doesn't know Spidey is Boomerang's roommate! The wall-crawler must pull out all the stops to prevent the Kingpin from wielding nigh-ultimate power, including assembling his street-level allies and donning an all-new costume! Plus: What fate awaits star-crossed lovers Randy Robertson and the Beetle? Find out as the years-old enmity between their fathers – Robbie Robertson and Tombstone – boils over once more! And all-out war erupts as the super-crime lords of the Marvel Universe compete at the whims of the Kingpin!

COLLECTING ***AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (2018) #61-65*** AND ***GIANT-SIZE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: KING'S RANSOM*** – BY NICK SPENCER, PATRICK GLEASON, FEDERICO VICENTINI, MARK BAGLEY, ROGÊ ANTÔNIO, ANDREW HENNESSY, EDGAR DELGADO AND ALEX SINCLAIR.

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